**1954 Single Cab**
Rare Barndoor Pick-Up

**Accessory overload**
All with a VW part number

# VOLKS WORLD

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A YELLOW BLACK RACER WITH A 220BHP TYPE 4

### 1963 RAGTOP BEETLE
# UNDER THE INFLUENCE
15 YEARS IN THE MAKING BUT STILL BANG ON TREND

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Outer £99.50

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MARCH 2015

PRACTICAL
VolksWorld

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## WELCOME TO THE MAG

I like to think every issue of *VolksWorld* has a little something for everybody in it, but the mix in this issue I'm particularly pleased with. As most of you will probably have gathered by now, I'm not into fast VWs, but Thomas Zeltner's Yellow Black Racer has stirred something in me I didn't think needed stirring. It's no secret I love a late model Beetle, but I really like the idea of a father being inspired to build a fast Beetle just to beat his son's fast Beetle. How cool is that? My dad has always been into cars, and has restored a few over the years, but I can't even begin to imagine lining up at the drag strip alongside him and racing him. In fairness, I can't even begin to imagine lining up at a dragstrip…

Whilst on the subject of families, I'm always heartened to hear stories of people enjoying their VWs with their kids and involving them in this hobby of ours. In my years as a motoring journalist I've attended a lot of different car shows and can honestly say that none I have experienced have been as family-orientated as the VW ones. Okay, you probably don't want to be dragging young kids around somewhere like Slough Swapmeet (though I did see plenty of people doing just that), but taking them to one of the more laid-back, one-day events or to a weekender like VW Action (still one of my favourite events of the year) is a brilliant idea. With so many kids these days welded to their mobile 'phones, or some sort of gaming device, getting them out in the open with a bunch of VW people might be just the breath of fresh air – literally – they need. If they end up into the VW way of life as well then all the better. Who knows, they might even end up wanting to build a better / lower / faster VW than you! Enjoy the issue. ■

James

**James Peene**
**Group editor**

**Photo:** Neil Vincent

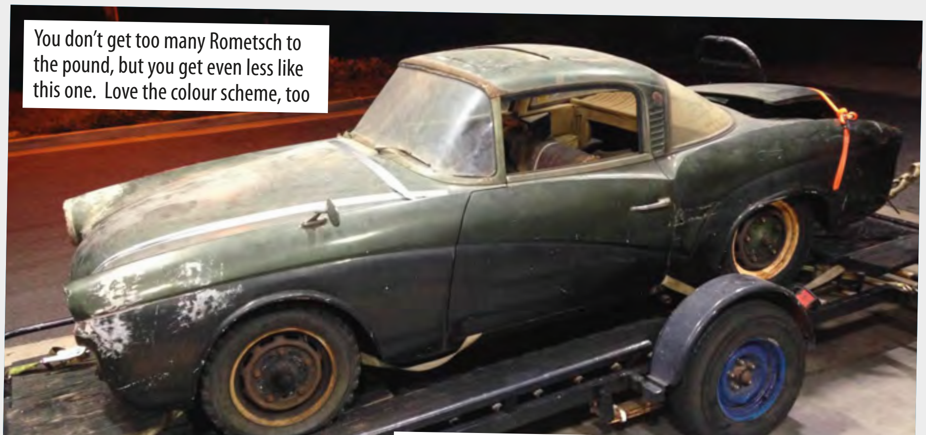
# Cool Flo Arena Entertainment

*VolksWorld* Show sponsors, Cool Flo, have once again come up trumps and put together a mouth-watering mix of live music and entertainment for the weekend of the show. Alongside this, there will be a display of classic air-cooled VWs, plus a BMX and skateboard half-pipe built especially for the show, upon which the Cool Flo team riders will be demonstrating their tricks and skills throughout the weekend. We can't promise you Bob Haro again this year, but there will be special guest riders in attendance, so be sure to check it out the schedule as soon as you get there to make sure you don't miss them.

Live music will be supported by Cool Flo's resident DJs, along with some of the best breakdance crews in the country, who will be battling it out against a background of hip hop beats and master scratching.

The ever-popular display of Cool Flo rides will be complemented this year by some of the best air-cooled cars from around Europe, including a special California Look display from Der Fieser Luftkühlers (DFL), who will be travelling *en masse* from Germany. From France will be the Wind Split, Serial Kombi's hi-top race Bus, which will be sporting a new look for 2015. Alongside these cars on the infamous Red Brick Road will be displays from the UK's most prominent Resto Cal clubs, Restowagen and Rebel Alliance. In short, there will be something to suit every taste, making this area one of the highlights of the 2015 show.

Cool Flo Lifestyle Clothing Co. will also be launching their 2015 clothing collection at the show from their trade stand in the Surrey Hall, and have promised us some big changes and extensions to their already popular range. Make sure you call by and check it out for yourselves.



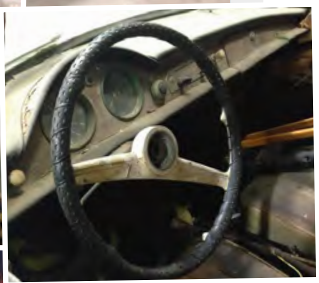
You don't get too many Rometsch to the pound, but you get even less like this one. Love the colour scheme, too

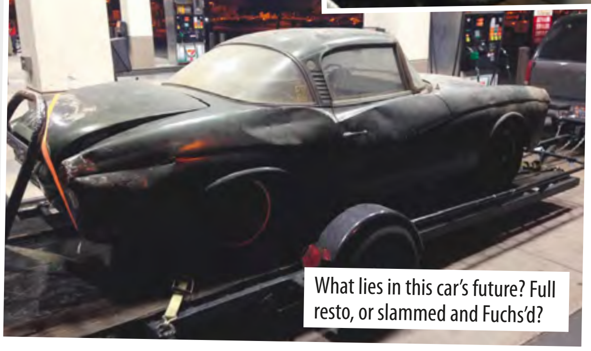
# Discovered

Just when you think you've seen it all, Randy Carlson from oldbug.com fires this one at you. It's a 1957 Rometsch, number 508 to be exact, that he recently unearthed, although the behind-the-scenes chase is sure to have been going on for a good while. The story goes the car was owned by a Californian couple since the 1960s, and last moved in 1971. Randy: "It is the oldest Lawrence-bodied Rometsch known to exist at this point, and I believe it is one of only two known with a sliding steel sunroof (the other being a much later model in the Grundmann collection) but it is proof, if proof were needed, that they are still out there."

The Rometsch is missing its bumpers, headlights and a few trim pieces, but otherwise looks pretty much all there, albeit with some sizeable battle scars. Best news of all is that, as we write this, it's on its way to the UK…

Factory steel sliding sunroof? Oof!





What lies in this car's future? Full resto, or slammed and Fuchs'd?

Buying Guide to...

MODIFIED BEETLES

THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF THEM ABOUT - THEY ARE ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR CUSTOMISED CARS TODAY, BUT HOW DO YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A RAD BUG AND A DEAD BUG?

FOR SALE

VW BEETLE, G-reg, lowered, Empi 8-spokes, 1800cc engine, twin carbs. £2900. 687 Lincoln Road, New England, Peterborough. (No phone).

"Often people buy a Beetle that has been bodged up and looks great on the outside but turns out to be rotten on the underside. Watch out."

"The main problem is cars that have been lowered incorrectly, or by too much, can be dangerous and ride so badly they become undriveable. Better to avoid the very low cars for sale."

FOR SALE

FOR SALE

< v Hands up if you remember Beetle World. On paper, it was like a dream come true – a one-stop restoration shop with a showroom full of modified Beetles to choose from. It went bust

# A cautionary tale

## How does a buyers' guide from the early '90s stack up today?

There I was, flicking through a copy of *Street Machine* from 1993, when I came across an article entitled Modified Beetles, which was essentially a buyers' guide for, well, modified Beetles. What struck me straight away was that the majority of the photos were obviously taken at the long defunct Beetle World, which once occupied the space on the side of the M25 that now looks like a cherry picker breeding ground. A quick scan of the useful people to know section at the end reveals just one of the six companies is still in existence, but how does the advice given then translate to today?

Firstly, the definition of modified Beetles has changed, or at least what people are doing to Beetles has. The guide focussed on three typical modified Beetles of the time - a Wizard Roadster, a Baja and a 'Cal-looker'. Without getting embroiled in an argument as to the definition of a Cal-looker, were we to do a similar guide today, the sub-genres would more likely be broken down to Cal Look, Resto Cal and 'Patina', though it seems to me the latter has become something of an umbrella term of late for anything that hasn't been painted, or appears not to have been painted.

Prices are tricky to compare but author, Matt Howell, opened the piece saying prices had come down "since the VW scene lost much of its youthful rave element." He went on to say that "Cal-lookers that were demanding four or five grand can now be snapped up for under half that." Reading further, the piece suggests that money would get you a "properly sorted Cal-looker", while £2,500 would buy you a "good Cal-looker with a decent 1300/1600cc engine in solid condition." The benchmark car in '93 was Darren Jacob's Targa Bug, winner of Europe's Most Beautiful VW at Bug Jam in 1990 which, at the time, was up for sale for £5,300 ono. These days, even the higher end of those brackets will only really buy you a decent unmodified late model, and won't get you anywhere near a 'properly sorted' car, regardless of the style it's been built in. That's all to be expected though, with the passing of over two decades.

> "Cue sniggers of laughter from the back. And the Midlands"

What's more interesting to read are the comments made about things to look out for when buying a modified Beetle. Rust is the obvious one. No change there. Though in light of my column last month I noted with glee the comment about generic repair sections being available from any VW specialist. When the article gets to suspension mods though, things are more telling. Uneven tyre wear, bump steer, track rods fouling on the body and petrol tank, no bump stops, no suspension travel, sloppiness… the list goes on. Now bear in mind this was in 1993 when the lowest cars around looked like stockers compared to today and you might be surprised by Mr. Howell's conclusion: "We'd suggest one spline is the maximum amount a Beetle should be lowered by." Cue sniggers of laughter from the back. And the Midlands.

### A journalist speaking

Now, you might think this is just a journalist speaking, and what the hell do they know about building cars, but Matt had done his research and this quote from seasoned VW fiddler, Tony Royston of Microgiant is worth repeating: "The main problem is cars that have been lowered incorrectly, or by too much, can be dangerous and ride so badly they become undriveable. Better to avoid the very low cars for sale." I can only imagine what Tony must make of some of the lowered VWs driving around these days.

On body modifications, the piece does have the decency to mention the inherent design flaw of the Wizard Roadster – the one where the lack of cooling vents means it will eventually cook your engine – and notes that some Bajas may have been a last resort styling change after an accident, and that one should keep one's wits about one as a great many Beetles have been made to look earlier than they actually are. All sound advice that still holds true today.

On engines, this being 1993 there was no talk of stroker cranks, forged pistons, turbos, fuel injection or even turbo mufflers, and a gander at the engines in the three case studies shows coloured dizzy caps and chrome dress-up kits. Anyone that ever fitted either of these will know from experience they should be avoided at all costs. If you're new to the game, heed that bit of advice.

And so to the case studies. Of the three cars chosen, I was surprised to see the '69 Wizard Roadster with stock steels, Porsche emblem hubcaps and a 1300 with a pancake air filter up for the most money - £4,750, putting it right at the top of Matt's scale and on a par with one of those properly sorted Cal Lookers. The cheapest, at £2,900, was a classic early '90's 'Looker that fits Matt's definition of a 'good' car to a tee. A baby blue '68, de-chromed, Baby Turbos, one-piece windows, fake 8s and an 1835 with 40s.

My guess is all three of these cars have long since bitten the dust, a legacy of the get-it-done-quick-for-Bug-Jam Beetle boom of the times, but it was pleasing to see much of the advice endures. And of that advice, none more so than the bit about radically lowered cars. You were warned then, please, if you are new to VWs and are looking to buy a modified Beetle, take this as a gentle reminder. ■

### What do you think?

Do you agree with the ex-ginger Oracle, or do you think he's talking twaddle? Join the debate by emailing us at volksworld@timeinc.com

James Murtough chilling in front of his '49 Beetle. This is what the day was all about

# Sun kissed

## Air-cooled VWs, barbecued food, friends new and old – just some of the ingredients to this super laid back, one-day gathering

**Words** Steve Parsons **Photos** Joss Ashley

The communal BBQ is a great chance to have a natter and to burn food

Now officially in its third year, the annual RSVP barbecue by the river in Bidford-on-Avon was once again blessed with glorious sunshine and chilled-out vibes. Considering it was held on the last weekend in September, it was a scorching hot day, with most folk donning shorts, t-shirts and suntan lotion.

The turnout easily surpassed previous years with models from most of Volkswagen's archives in attendance, and people travelled from far and wide to enjoy a relaxed day of air-cooleds, friends and good times.

The RSVP guys commissioned the super talented ob1 (www.theob1.co.uk) to hand make all of their trophies, which were hotly contested. Choosing who gets to take one home is always a tough choice, as the quality of cars is so strong, but this year's lucky winners were as follows: Raddest Bus award went to Jon Atkinson for his killer patina'd Barndoor; Raddest Ride went to Jess de Sousa's slammed Nutria Brown Notch, while Terry Settle's Lowlight Ghia was this year's Peoples' Choice. There was also a bonus prize this year of an engine service kit, presented in a custom 3-stage pearl and blue mica toolbox from the kind and generous folk at Creative Coachworks (www.creativecoachworks.co.uk). This was given to Mick Case for his hard-as-nails, gnarly ragtop Oval.

On behalf of RSVP, I'd like to say thank you to everyone who made the effort to come along and make the day another success. We're up for it, so let's do it all again next year.

> “People travelled from far and wide to enjoy a relaxed day of air-cooleds, friends and good times”

Mike and Sophie's new whip ticks many boxes

We love Mark Davies' super clean, 'cap-less Split

# EVENTS AND CLUBS

Let us know about your VW event or club – email volksworld@timeinc.com

Mick Case's ragtop Oval took home an award

Beetles, BMXs, beers and burgers…

Phil Sutton broke his patina'd Single Cab on the way, so turned around and borrowed his dad, Alan's, 11-window double door for the day

Love the nose-down stance on this Turkis Bug

Crowd pleaser. Impromptu BMX stunt display by Colin 'Knievel' Pace

theob1.co.uk handmade trophies. Respect

Terry Settle travelled a fair distance from up't north in his way cool 'bagged Ghia

Tough 'caged Oval looked and sounded great

The 4-stud thug. RSVP member, Paul Scriven, shows that a late model Bug can turn heads

## EVENT LIST

### DubFreeze

**When:** February 15

**Where:** Bingley Hall, Stafford

**Web:** www.dubfreeze.co.uk

### Spring Dub

**When:** March 1

**Where:** Great Yorkshire Showround, Harrogate

**Web:** www.springdub.co.uk

### Freddy Files

**When:** March 15

**Where:** Ninove, Belguim

**Web:** freddyfiles2015.skynetblogs.be

### Dub Aid

**When:** March 20-22

**Where:** Towcester Racecourse, Northamptonshire

**Web:** www.dubaid.co.uk

VOLKS WORLD
SHOW 2015
28th-29th March
Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey

### The *VolksWorld* Show

**When:** March 28-29

**Where:** Sandown Park, Esher

**Web:** www.volksworldshow.com

### Elemental VW Show

**When:** April 11

**Where:** Crouch Valley Showground, Rayleigh, Essex

**Web:** www.elementalvw.org.uk

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**ISSN number 0954-0164**

# PRODUCTS

Selling a new product? email volksworld@timeinc.com

## > Barndoor repro steering wheel

**From:** **Karmann Konnection** **Price:** **£384**

A superb reproduction of the 1953-1955 three-spoke Barndoor tiller. This will also fit all Split Screen Buses up to 1967, although there is no provision for a cancelling ring for the turn signals, so you'll have to do that yourself. The quality is superb, and it comes complete with a horn button. Available in three factory-style colours: gloss black, ivory or silver beige (light grey)

CÖDE
PROFESSIONAL CLEANING SYSTEMS
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PRESTIGE VEHICLE RANGE

## < Cöde ultra fine polish

**From:** **www.codeclean.co.uk** **Price:** **500ml for £10.50**

This paint cleanser, which the company says has been three years in the making, incorporates a fine abrasive and, as the polish is applied, the abrasive particles break down into increasingly smaller elements, giving a finer polishing action the more you use it. Contains no waxes, silicones or filling oils

## ∨ Laser torque wrench

**From:** **Laser Tools www.lasertools.co.uk** **Price:** **from £109.10**

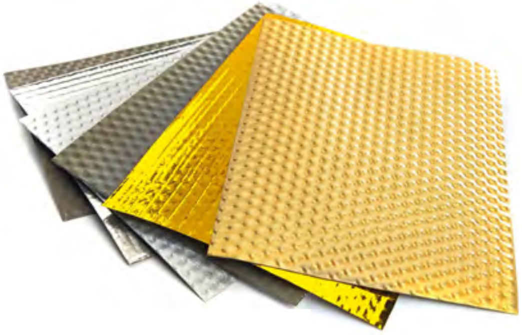
Did you know that just about every nut and bolt on a VW has a factory-specified torque rating, even down to the little acorn nuts on the sump cover? To tighen them properly, you need a good quality torque wrench, and this new range from Laser Tools are strong and ergonomic. Three sizes are available: ¼-inch drive, ⅜-inch drive and ½-inch drive

## > Rigid heat shield

**From:** **www.zircotec.com** **Price:** **TBC**

Thermal management specialist, Zircotec, has created its first ever 'structural' heatshield called ZircoFlex® FORM. The new, rigid, stainless steel heatshield provides Zircotec's ceramic coating protection, together with the strength and ability to form structures.

It's an ideal solution for any air-cooled VWs with performance exhaust systems that run close to the rear valance as it will stop the exhaust heat transferal that can cause bubbling in the paint



## ∧ Ali side step

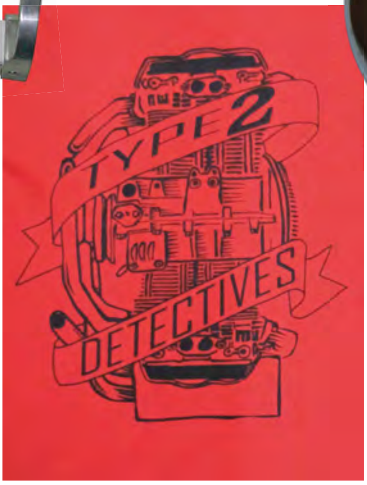
**From:** **www.coolairvw.co.uk** **Price:** **£99.50**

Whether you're going for a stock look, or a custom look on your Bus, these aluminium side steps are one of the few accessories that work across both styles and have an instant visible impact. They fit all Type 2s from 1950-1979, except Brazilian Bay Window models. Steps to fit these are available, but cost £154.50

## > Type 2 limited

**From:** **type2detectives.com** **Price:** **£20**

These new limited edition t-shirts from Type 2 Detectives have just arrived. They are designed by renowned artist, D. Roper, exclusively for Type 2 Detectives and are the first of a number of limited run designs that will be available throughout 2015. If you fancy one, don't hang about, because we're pretty sure these won't



## 3 Accessories for under £50!

### ∧ Late Bay front grille trims

**From:** **www.customandcommercial.com**

There isn't much you can buy for less than £30 that can spruce up the front of your VW but, if you own a 1973-1979 Bay Window Bus, then these deluxe grille trims, part of the company's German Quality range, should be up there at the top of your shopping list

### ∧ Late Beetle trim set

**From:** **www.vwheritage.com**

Give the exterior of your late model Beetle a spring clean and freshen up with this complete seven-piece exterior trim set in bright anodised aluminium. This narrow trim set includes the bonnet trim at the length to be fitted with a VW roundel. To fit you will need 34 clips, which can be ordered separately

### ∧ Headlight grilles

**From:** **www.aircooledaccessories.com**

These vintage-style mesh grilles fit Bay Windows, late model Beetles, Type 3s and Karmann Ghias. They are made from stainless steel and require no modifications to fit over the glass as they have a neat clip at the top that hooks in between the glass and the headlight rim, then fixes at the bottom using the original mounting bolt

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# LETTERS

Share your views on the VW scene – email volksworld@timeinc.com

## Letter of the month

### Presidential Bug

*Rob McGee, via email*

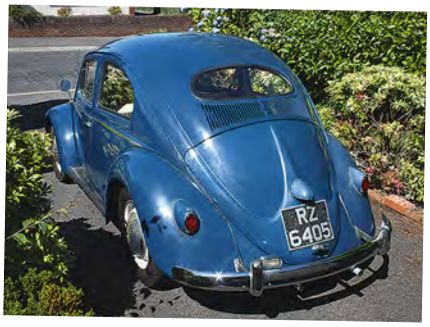
Hi *VolksWorld*, I thought I was hearing things when someone in my office starting talking about a president driving a Beetle, but apparently Uruguay's president, José Mujica, drives a 1987 Beetle. He is known as the world's poorest president but, for some reason, an Arab sheikh wanted to buy the car, which has become a symbol of his humble lifestyle. The president also gives away a large part of his salary as he feels he does not need it. I'll have it, thanks! The offer on the Beetle was a million dollars, but he didn't take it seriously.

I'm just wondering, do you know of an Arab sheikh, or anyone very wealthy, who would like a Beetle as I will happily offer them my 1972 Beetle for exactly half. That's right, I'll sell mine to someone with lots of cash for only £500k. Now that's a deal!

*Hi Rob, I'm sorry but we can't help you with your quest. On a more serious note, wouldn't you love your local parliamentarians to drive old VWs? I'm sure they'd get our votes for sure. Sadly, president José Mujica is not a diehard VW nut like us, the former revolutionary who is famous for lambasting the West for its excessive consumerism is famous in his country for his frugal lifestyle, shunning the more usual trappings of a presidential lifestyle and the Beetle was simply the cheapest and least costly car to run. In light of the sheikh's offer, he has said he is open to the idea of auctioning the Beetle off for charity. – **CO'T***

## Perfect match?

*Rob Brown, via email*



Hello *VolksWorld*, have you any idea what colour my Oval is? I thought it was L360 Sea Blue, the wrong colour for 1956 I think, but there looks to be evidence of L351 Coral Red on some parts of the car. Any idea what colour it should be? The chassis number is 1169541

While I'm harassing you for information, do you know where I can get mail order old VW paint codes mixed up in spray cans for temporary repairs until a proper restoration can be carried out?

*Hello Rob, If there's evidence of red then the only red Ovals ever came in was Coral Red, so you're right there. When it comes to the colour it is now, we agree it's not Sea Blue but, other than that, we really can't say. If it's a VW colour, it could be something like L436 Indigo Blue, but it could equally be a colour from another manufacturer entirely. Your best bet for temporary repairs it is to take something like the Pope's nose to your local automotive paint specialist and having them match it and make up an aerosol from that. – **JP***

## See him rollin'

*Charlie Quinn, Stirling*

Hi *VolksWorld*, I don't know if it's mean of me to send this in or interesting, but I couldn't ignore it when I spotted this on the internet one night.

It looks like it happened in New Jersey and the car transporter turned over. Thankfully, nobody was hurt, but the one thing that caught my eye was the Karmann Ghia convertible on its side. The report said of the scene and the Ghia: "One of the cars could be seen still attached to the overturned trailer as crews were working to get the truck off its side, while another car – a small green convertible – was resting on its side against a utility pole." What a shame as it looks to be in good condition. Apart from that, my initial thoughts were of the new owner who was probably waiting for their dream Ghia to be delivered. Thankfully, we haven't seen that too much over here that I'm aware of.

*Hi Charlie, yikes! That has to one of the worst nightmares for your pride and joy. If nothing else, this letter should act as a warning for anyone having their VWs transported around the country. Check your insurance and that of the transport company to make sure they are covered for accidental damage, and that they are aware of the value of your vehicle. – **CO'T***

## Pretty picture please

*John Peters, Somerset*

Hi *VolksWorld*ians, I've just bought a new house and it has a garage, the first garage I've ever owned! I now want to decorate it, and would love to frame some pictures of feature cars from the last year or two, especially my favourite one of all time, which is the black 1953 ragtop Oval from last year. I'll be getting my own Oval project out of my friend's lock up next weekend, so I can finally start tinkering with it and making it into my dream Beetle.

So my question is, do you ever sell off prints or pictures of feature cars once they've been in the magazine? If so, where can I get one and how quickly? Not that I am keen to get my dream garage finished or anything!

Great magazine, it's been a massive influence on my hobby. Cheers lads and lassies!

*Hi John, you can download wallpapers of your favourite feature cars from the VolksWorld website. They're free and will print to around A4 size, making them ideal for small framed photos in your garage. You can check them all out here: www.volksworld.com/wallpaper/ – **CO'T***

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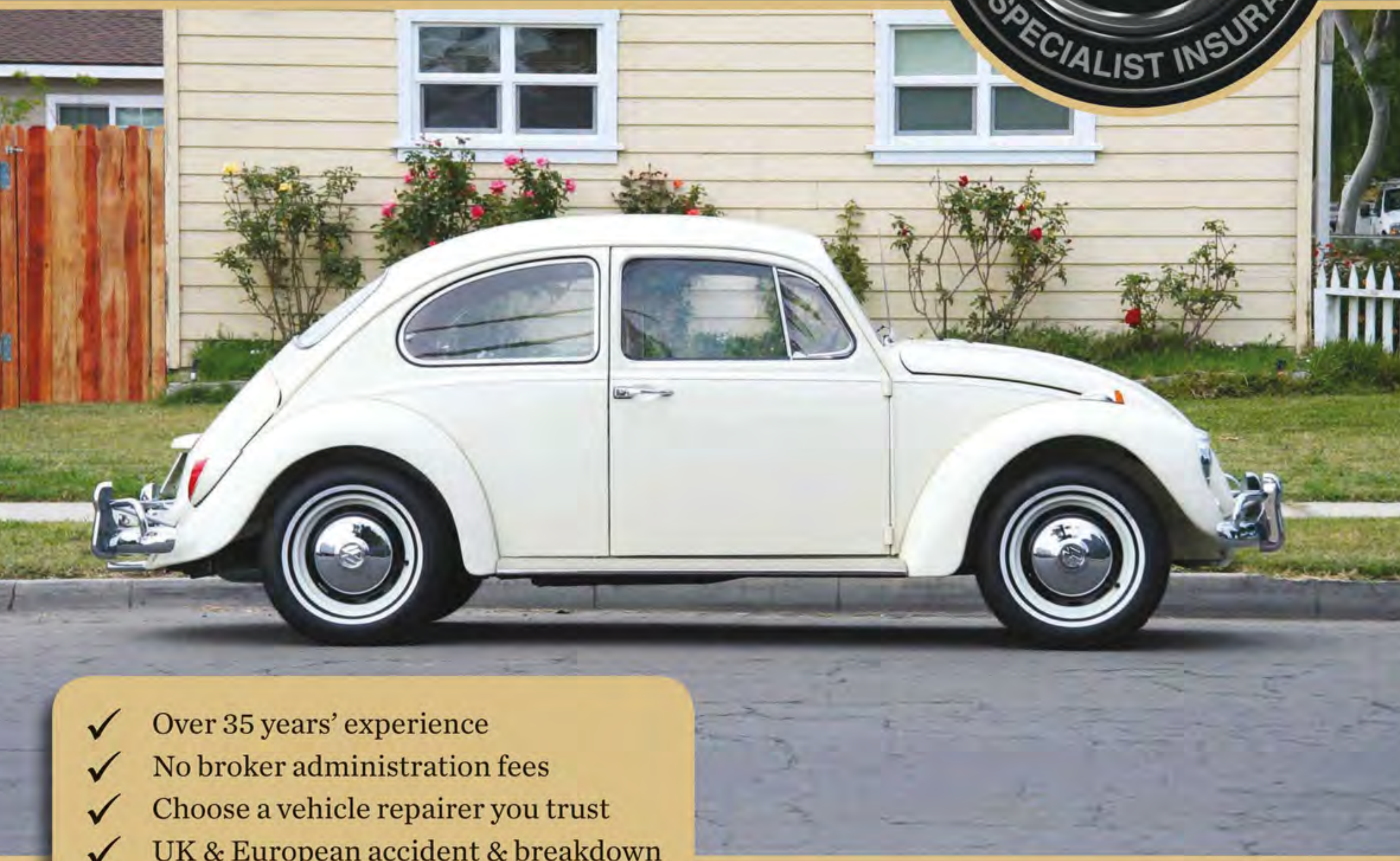

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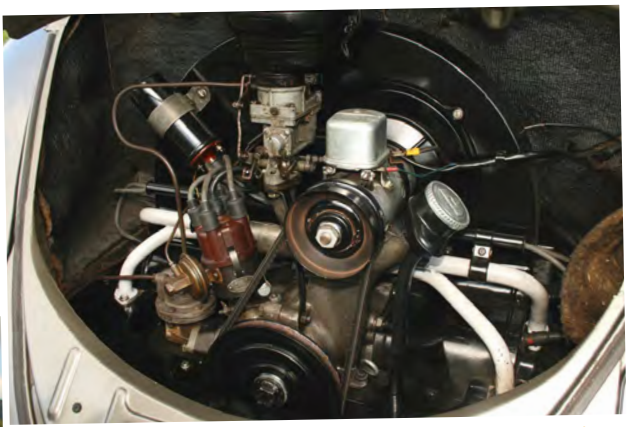
FP0030

# Car of the month

A stock, matching numbers, RHD Oval with traceable history is a rare find these days



^ Original, matching numbers engine is still going strong after a recent rebuild

^ Hazet spare wheel tool kit still rates as the most useful / desirable accessory going

## Russ Cartwright's 1956 Oval

Russ Cartwright is only the fifth owner of this Beetle in 58 years, which portrays a huge amount of originality, including the bodywork, which has been repainted in the original colour with the only new exterior parts being the bumpers and hubcaps. “On the way to Bob's Meet at BBT in Belgium in 2013, the gearbox started to scream its head off, and Bob very kindly allowed me to put the car on his ramp and all the mechanics suddenly descended on the Beetle,” remembers Russ. “Fortunately, all that was required was replenishment of the gearbox oil, and we were assured the car would make the journey home, and it did, covering the round trip of 1,585 miles in total without incident. I did, however, decide to have the original gearbox rebuilt, along with the original 30-horse engine, that saw fitment of new pistons and barrels. This also seemed like a good time to repaint the tinware and give the engine a full detailing.”

> “don't get behind me 'cause I'll be going real slow”

Russ says his Beetle just about pulls his teardrop caravan, which weighs in at 315kg. ”If you see the caravan glinting in the distance going up the M1, don't get behind me 'cause I'll be going real slow,” he laughs.

Since Russ purchased his Beetle, he's fitted a Bambus under-dash tray, a set of flashing indicators (as he's found other road users don't see the semaphores), pop-out windows, a reproduction roof rack, an Australian sunblind and a RetroSound radio. “We've fitted an upscaler, which just skims off enough voltage to run an MP3 player, digital radio sat nav and a 'phone charger, all on six volts, which is impressive,” enthuses Russ.

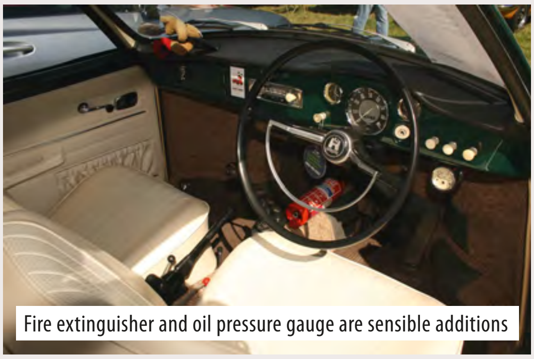
^ The presence of a gorgeous dark green leatherette interior leads us to believe this is an early '56 car, as later '56s had red interiors

One for the Freddy Files one-year-only '67 Heaven meet

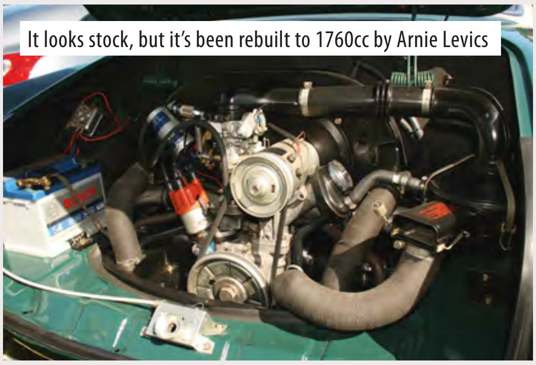
## Gordon Balmer's 1967 Ghia

Gordon purchased his Karmann Ghia around 12 years ago. It was sitting in a barn as an unfinished project, with the bottom nine inches of the car missing all the way around. Its restoration was subsequently completed by Kerry Smith at VW Evolution in Westbury, Wilts. "The car is powered by one of the last Mexican-built engines," explains Gordon. "It's a 1600cc that's been re-worked to 1760cc by VW specialist Arnie Levics. The oilways have been re-worked and it's got different pistons and valve gear, though I've retained the original carburettor and dynamo. The engine now breathes much easier and has been built for more relaxed cruising." The Karmann also sports its original colours of Roulette Green and white.

The car has also retained its original air pressure-operated windscreen washers, 6V windscreen wiper motor and the factory electro-mechanical clock is still present and in full working order. "We took the car over to Osnabrück in Germany to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Karmann in 1995," recalls Gordon. "In 2014, it won Best Car at the Karmann Ghia International Meeting in Worcs, and in August at Sherborne, Dorset, it won Best 1960's Car at the Lions Classic & Vintage Car Show."



Fire extinguisher and oil pressure gauge are sensible additions



It looks stock, but it's been rebuilt to 1760cc by Arnie Levics

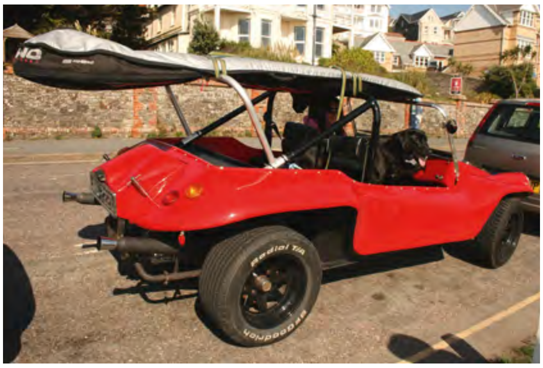
Fun in the sun, especially when it's towed behind a T5 for the long stretches of a journey!

## Karl and Debbie Harmsworth's Volksrod

Karl purchased his Volksrod Buggy several years ago in a slightly ropey state, and has since completed a repaint, engine rebuild, fitted a new 32/36 Weber carburettor, a new front beam and given the Buggy a general tidy up. For the best of both worlds, with VW camping and fun leisure driving with the Volksrod, Karl says he sometimes tows the Buggy behind his daily driver T5 on an A-frame.

"My pal made up the bolts for the engine cover, and also the tubular extension to the roll bar, so I can mount my surfboard on the top," says Karl. "It's only simply fitted with a couple of cable ties, as there's hardly any weight involved, but it works well enough. I've even had three surfboards and a kayak on top, with no problems at all.

"The Buggy currently sits on black painted steel wheels, but I'm on the lookout for a set of old EMPI alloys, or maybe some Wellers, with bigger tyres at the back. I use the Buggy for work and all sorts, but especially love taking it to the beach."



This one really is beige against the machine!

## Kevin and Jane Sandiford's 1971 1302S

This Beetle was Jane Sandiford's first car in 1982. Kevin and Jane subsequently went to live in Spain for a while, and the car was stored in Devon during this time, and remained there for a long while after they returned home, too. Eventually, Kevin decided to sell the car. "Jane was initially quite horrified at the prospect of her Beetle being sold and, when the new owner came to take the car away, she asked him to give her first refusal if he ever decided to sell."

Nine months later, the new owner called to say he'd stripped the car down and it had more rust than he envisaged, so Kevin and Jane bought it back, and Jane assures us there's no way the Beetle will be sold again! Much work had already been completed, and it just needed the last few bits putting back together before being pressed back into service, at times towing the couple's matching Eriba Puck caravan.

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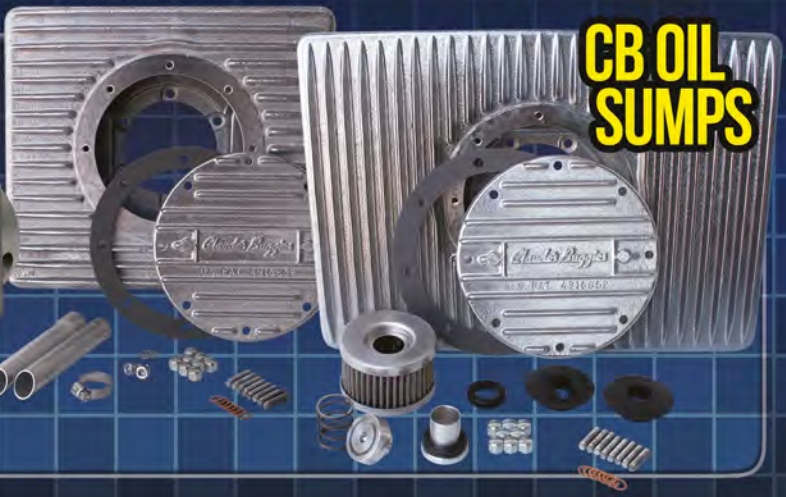

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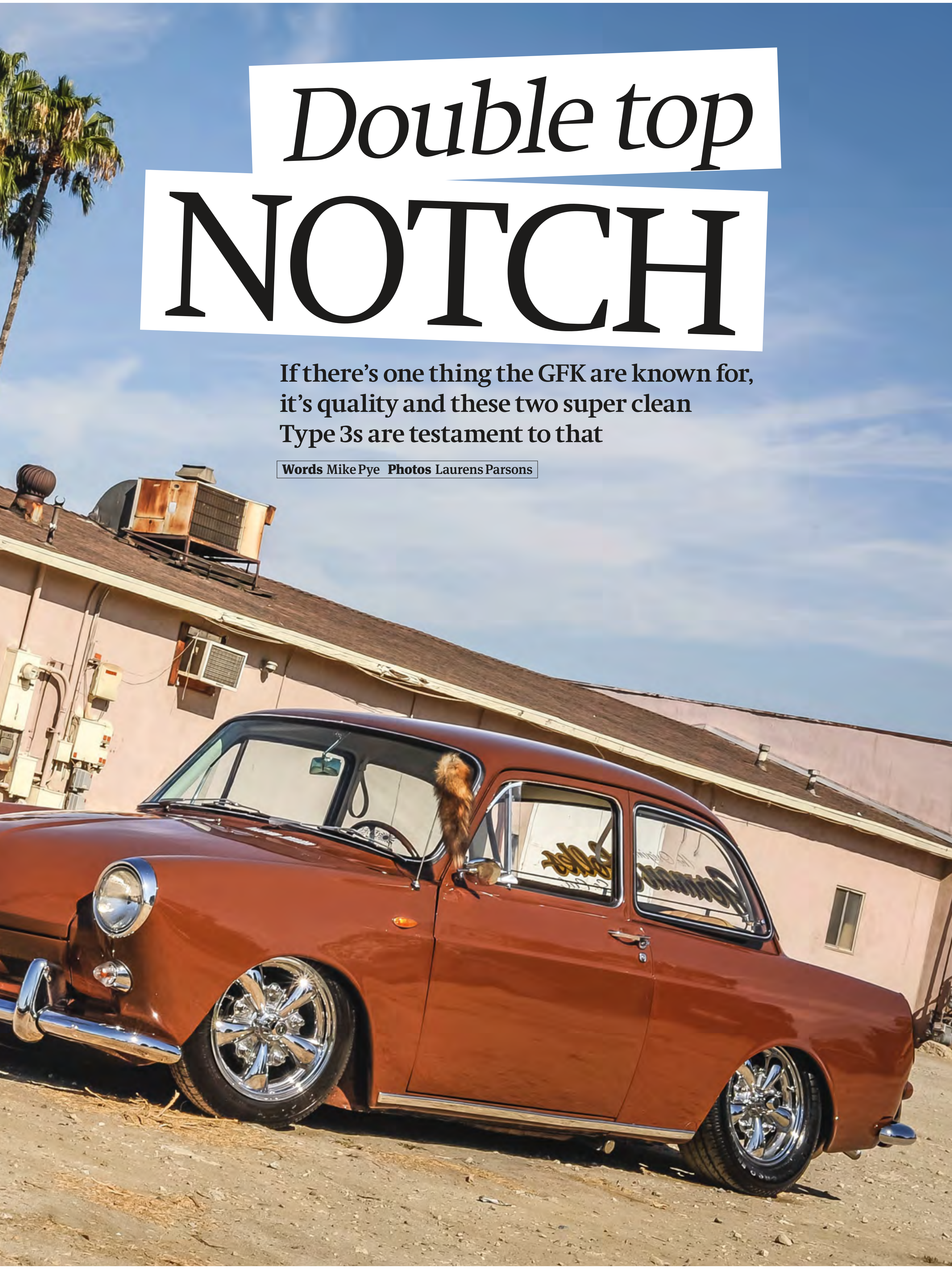
# Double top
# NOTCH

If there's one thing the GFK are known for, it's quality and these two super clean Type 3s are testament to that

**Words** Mike Pye **Photos** Laurens Parsons



"Growing up in LA in the late '80s, VWs were everywhere"

^ Although it doesn't have a narrowed beam, Victor's Notch exhibits the classic German Folks look. No doubt about it, it just works on an early Type 3

It's been 17 years since we first brought you news of the German Folks VW club (GFK, the K originally referring to their chosen spelling of Klub) in Los Angeles, California, and a lot has happened since. Even then, the club was already some 16 years old, but its name and fame didn't spread worldwide until the magazines started to pick up on the particular style GFK cars were being built in. In our 25th anniversary special edition, we credited the German Folks as being the club that originated what is now universally recognised as the Resto Cal look, such was the impact we felt they were having on the scene, doing much the same for Resto Cal as that other well known California VW club, Der Kleiner Panzers, had done for Cal Look around the world. Clearly, we're not the only ones to feel their presence – as Darth Vader once said to Father Christmas – as in 2013 German Folks were chosen as the featured car club at the massive Pomona Swapmeet, and I can't think of another club that has a forum thread on their club cars running to over 950 pages! Hell, there's even talk of a fake GFK club somewhere in Europe, but we don't want to get into that here.

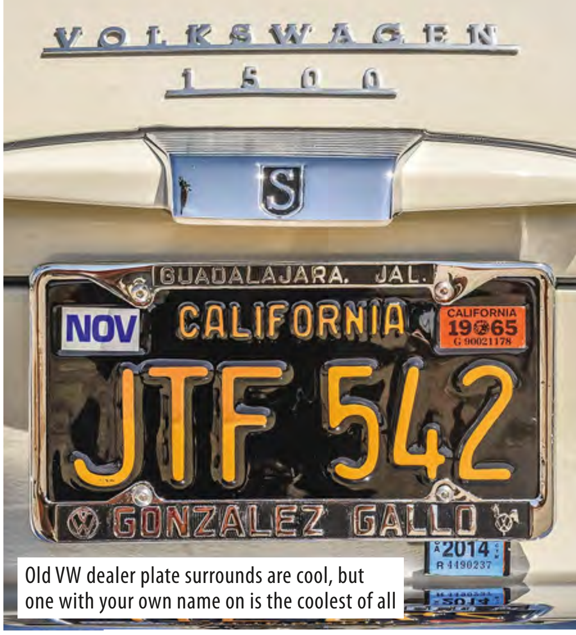
## They wear it well

Most people, myself included, associate the German Folks with Beetles, yet a quick spin through just the first half dozen or so pages of the epic thread mentioned above shows that Type 3s have been very much part of the club culture since the early days. And it's not hard to see why. Early Type 3s just suit the Resto Cal look, more so than they suit any other popular style VWs are commonly built in, and that's something that the owners of both these Notches knew only too well. Victor Gonzalez, the man with the keys to the white one, has been a Folk for a couple of years now, but has been into VWs for as long as he can remember. "Growing up in LA in the late '80s and early '90s VWs were everywhere on the streets, just being driven. I guess you could say they made a lasting impression on me." With a back catalogue that includes early 'Verts, big window ragtops, Oval ragtops, a Crewcab and an early Fastback it's fair to say Victor has seen it, done it and bought the t-shirt, too.

^ Here's Victor, he's 31 and married to Roxanne and has a daughter, Aleena, and two boys, Elias and Andrew

Richie Casillas, on the other hand, who drives the brown car, is a little longer in the VW tooth than Victor, having bought his first Bug in 1978, but he's only been a Folk since building this car – his entry ticket, if you like, to the club. "All my friends in high school drove VWs, and I had one too, but I got out of them for a while and got into building Harley Davidsons instead. Then seven years ago, my homie Bones introduced me to the German Folks. A couple of years later I got a call from Mike Navarro asking me to build a car so I may join the club." Interested, Richie started looking for a suitable car, and settled on this '62 Notch. That was in 2009. "I wanted to do something different to all the Bugs, and I liked the fact this car was early, from the first year they came out." The following year, 2010, Victor found his '65 or, more correctly, the '65 found him: "I

With their heat-welded seams, TMI seat covers are about as close as you can get to the originals. They fit pretty good, too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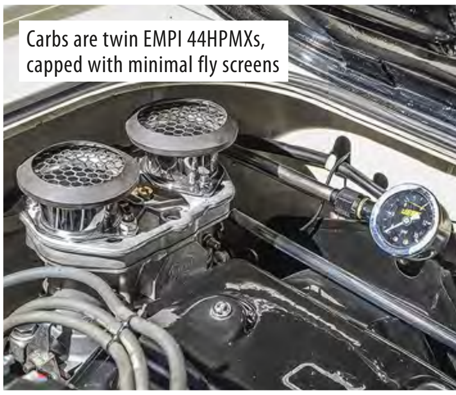
Old VW dealer plate surrounds are cool, but one with your own name on is the coolest of all

Paintwork on this car is excess all areas. Polished fuel tank breather hard line is naughty and nice

Nestling in the shade of the rear window blind is the speaker that time forgot

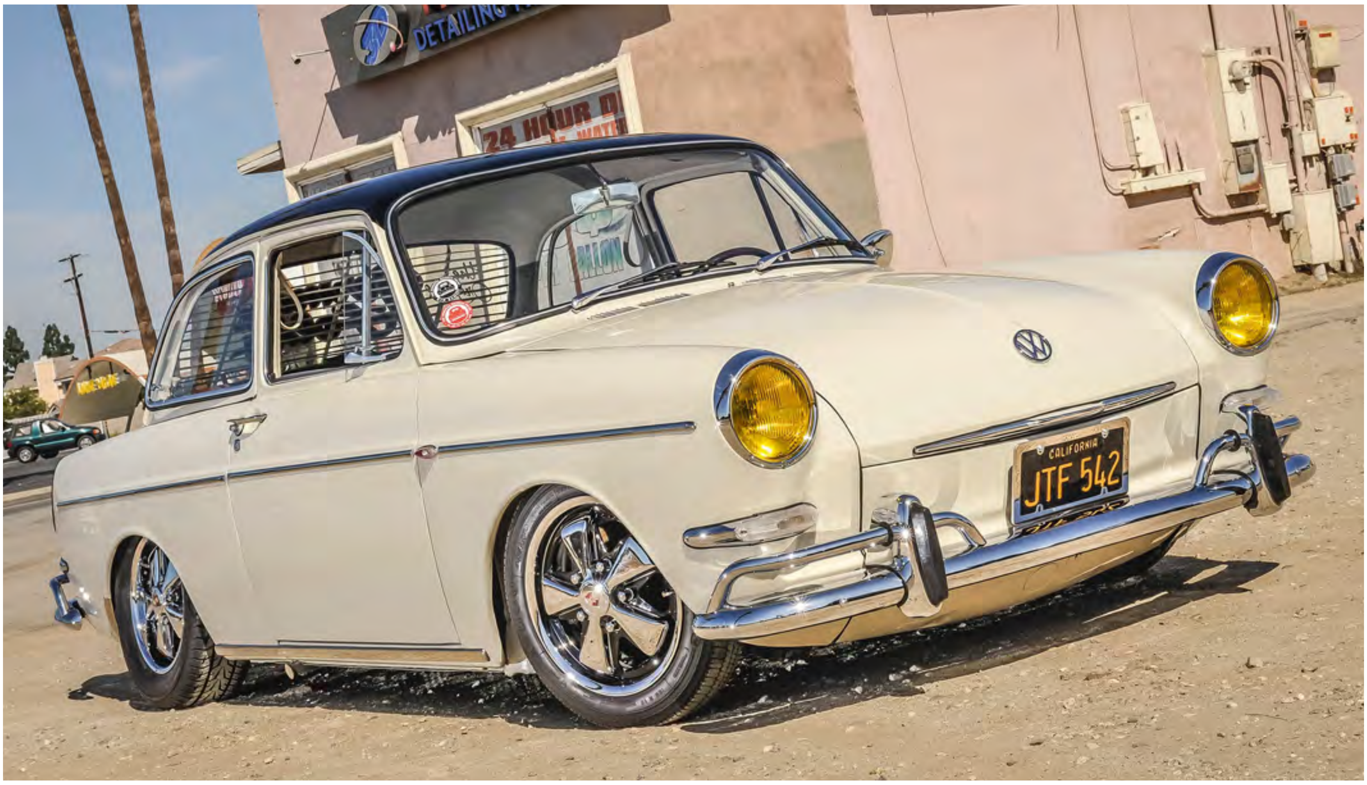
Bambus under-dash tray and Berg short throw shifter – form and function



Carbs are twin EMPI 44HPMXs, capped with minimal fly screens

Car Craft did the machining, Brothers Machine Shop the heads and Todd Reynolds at 5150 Engines helped Victor put together the tastefully detailed 2007cc motor

Original door trims like this are a sure sign this was a pukka car to start with



^ No repros here, these are the real deal, chromed 'n' detailed 4.5 and deep six earlies, with 125 Firestone F560s and 205/65 Firestone Champion HRs

< Buffer fact: '65 1500s are identified by white needles in the gauges. Better that that though, the whole dash on this car is original, paint, dash top an' all, with a Flat4 GTV cherry on top

was visiting my parents at their home and at the time I drove a '64 'Vert. I had it parked on the driveway and a guy on a bicycle stopped by and said he had a VW sitting in his garage that was for sale." Like all serial VW owners would, Victor went straight round to have a look, and came back $4,000 lighter but with the keys to a '65 Notch. "It was a 72k mile, all original car, still with its original 1500S motor. He told me he was planning on restoring it, but lost interest. I'd always wanted a Notch since selling my Fastback and I knew I wasn't going to find another one like this, for this sort of money, so I had to have it." A couple of days later, he returned, and drove it home, with the intention of just turning it into a useable daily driver. Yeah, right.

## Twice as nice

Aside from the obvious German Folks connection, there are a number of other similarities in the two guys' stories: both cars have been painted twice, both cars are said to be all original metal under their paintwork – something we here in the UK can only dream of when it comes to Type 3s – and both pack a bit more than a stock motor under their engine lids.

"It was a 72k mile, all-original car, still with its original 1500S motor"

Both knowing the German Folks way before they started on their individual projects, there was only one way they were going to go, and that was to the floor, over some chromed rims, with meticulous attention to detail throughout, so the first job on both cars was a complete strip down to bare 'shells. As anyone who is familiar with Type 3s will know, parts for them are pretty thin on the ground, especially when you're talking about a model in a country where they were never officially sold, which makes buying a good 'un in the first place all the more important. And if ever there was such a thing, Victor's car was that – 100% complete, low mileage, rust free and an S model to boot. Proof positive of how good this car was is the dash, which still wears its original factory paint, all its original equipment and even its coveted factory dash pad. So much for the oft-quoted saying that you'll never find a Californian Type 3 without a cracked dash pad, eh? Better than that, most of the interior, including the door panels, arm rests and upper door trims are all original to the car, too. Sensibly, and because of this, there was no way Victor was going to get into any debate on the colour the finished car would end up. L87 Pearl White it was, so L87 Pearl White it was to stay, along with the very desirable red mesh vinyl interior option it was ordered with.

Having sent the body off to be re-painted, Victor got busy on the floorpan, which required nothing more than a good clean up and repaint in gloss black. Remember, at this point Victor was just planning on building a nice daily – that was until the body came back from the paint shop, covered all over in the stock Pearl White. "I just wasn't happy with the paint," he recalls, "so I sent it to Jerry Cobain at Orange Coast Collision in La Habra to have it done again. This time I decided to have the roof painted black, which really gave it a different look. When I got the car back from Jerry, all thoughts of a daily went out the window!"

### TECH INFO

**ENGINE:** 2007cc pancake motor; Bugpack crank and H-beam rods; Engle 120 cam; Brothers 40 / 35.5mm heads; 8.5:1 CR; EMPI 44HPMX carbs; 148bhp at the flywheel
**GEARBOX:** Built 4-speed by Wright Gearbox; Super Diff; 3.88 ring and pinion
**SUSPENSION:** Type 3 beam; Old Speed dropped spindles; notched and extended spring plates; EMPI shocks
**BRAKES:** '69 Fastback front discs, re-drilled to 5 x 130PCD; T3 rear drums, drilled to 5 x 130

## Ride quality

From there, it was into full-on Folks mode, starting with a severe change of altitude in the chassis. To achieve this, the trailing arms were rotated a couple of notches on the torsion bars in the stock beam and a pair of Old Speed dropped spindles added to retain some of the ride quality Type 3s are so loved for.

Interior in biscuit-coloured nappa leather is the work of Julio's Auto Upholstery. Note the chromed parcel shelf bar behind the rear seat

Note the red needle gauges as this is a '62. Another Flat4 GTV is in the house, but this one is stained to match the interior

1776cc motor was built by Chico Performance Engines using a DPR crank, TM10 chromoly cam, VW 043 heads and 7.5 compression for an honest 85bhp

Fully carpeted boot with chrome details

Stock-style door cards in a custom stylee

Under-bonnet detailing is similar to Victor's car, but then what else do you do with a Type 3, except carpet it, but only a madman would you do that over paintwork like this?

“being good Folks, both have chosen to roll on Firestone rubbers”

Here’s Richie, he wouldn’t tell us his age but we know he used to build Harleys and is now looking for a ’63 Impala

Aside from a pair of shorter EMPI oil shocks, the only other alteration Victor made at the front is to modify the lower beam clamps so they don’t protrude down as far below the beam.

Proving there’s more than one way to skin a cat, Richie went a completely different way with the suspension on his car, choosing to use a custom built, four-inch narrowed Type 1 beam with Sway-A-Way adjusters and KYB shocks. While the end result in terms of looks is much the same, clearly a Type 1 beam doesn’t just bolt straight up to a Type 3, so this is a significantly more complex way of lowering one of these cars. But if, as Richie did, you want a narrowed front end on a Type 3, a beam conversion is the only way to achieve it.

No such dilemmas at the back, however, both cars have been lowered by rotating the spring plates on the torsion bars, three notches in both cases, with the former replacing the stock spring plates with some lengthened and notched versions. Shocks are EMPI and KYB respectively.

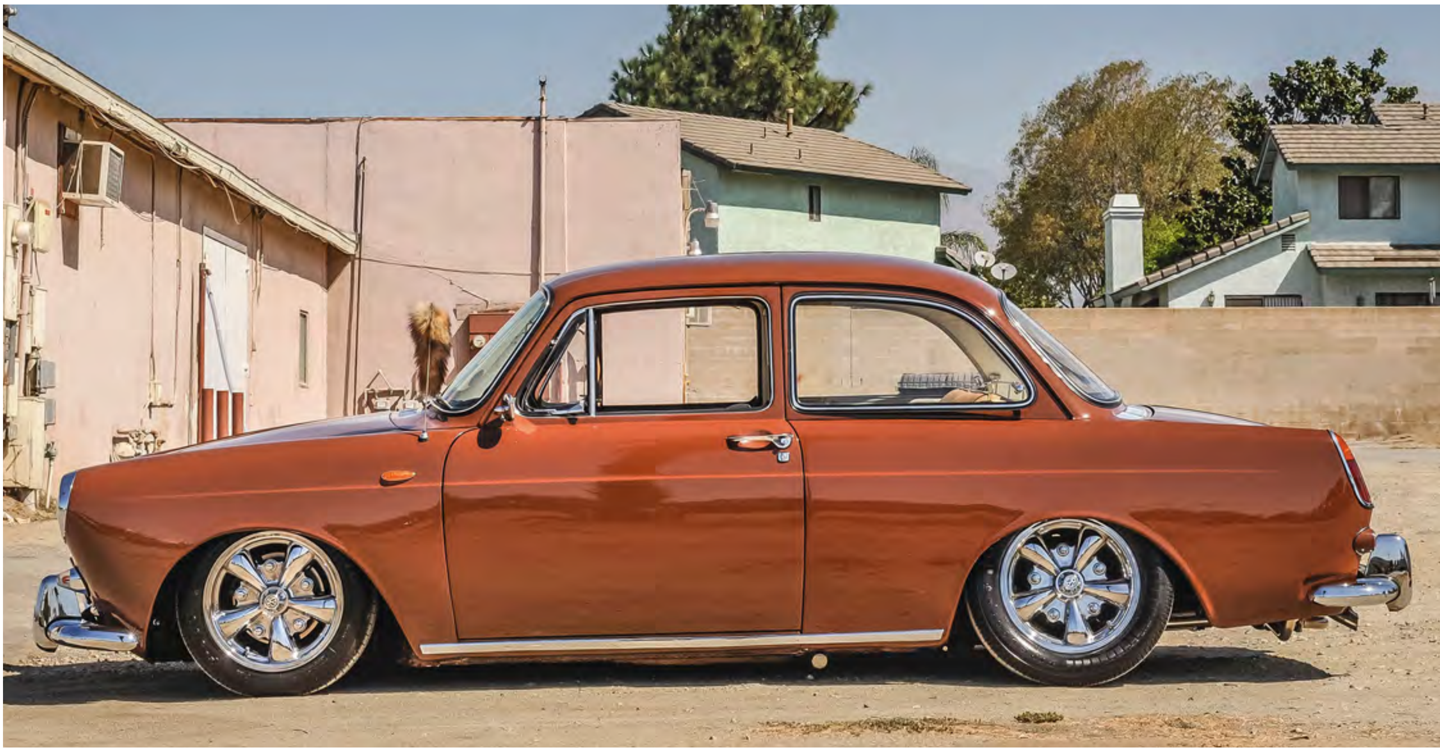
When it came to brakes, both owners decided a little upgrade was in order to the factory specified drums all round, so Victor opted to convert his car to a set of stock ’69 Fastback discs, while Richie looked to the aftermarket and chose AC Industries’ wide-5 disc brake package. As this kit is similar to the old Autocavan disc brake kit that was sold here in the UK for a short period of time, which also used machined down wide-5 drums as the hubs, it means both cars have ended up with stock VW disc brake components on the front, albeit by rather different routes. Rear brakes are stock on both cars, though Victor’s have been drilled for the Porsche 5 x 130PCD necessary to bolt up his choice of wheels. Ah, the wheels...

## The full bling

In our appraisal of the effect the German Folks had on the wider VW scene, we noted they were the first club to popularise chromed wheels on air-cooled VWs, so it’s no surprise to see just that on both these cars, although the exact treatment is quite different. Richie has gone for the full bling EMPI 5-spoke replicas, while Victor has stayed true to the old Folks school and sourced a set of genuine Fuchs, 4.5s front and deep sixes, and had them chromed by Fontana Polishing and Plating in Bloomington, CA before turning them over to perhaps the most prolific of all car building Folk, Paul Smoot, for some stock-style detailing. The crowning glory, though, has to be the hand detailed centre caps by Victor’s wife Roxanne. Now I love my wife, but she wouldn’t do that for me, so hang onto her Vic, you’ve got a good one there. Naturally, being good Folks, both have chosen to roll on Firestone rubbers all round.

We mentioned earlier about both cars having a bit more power on tap than VW saw fit to equip these cars with and again, while this is true of both cars, the routes Victor and Richie took to reach the same end goal are entirely different. In the spirit of doing as much

Want a tucked front end on a Type 3 like Richie’s car here? You’ll be wanting a Type 1 beam conversion then



^ If you want to do some tyre buffing between the two cars, Richie's here has a 135 F560s and 205/60s combination

< Hang on a minute, what's that in the rear footwell? Looks like a hefty slice of sub to us

as he could on his car himself, Victor set about assembling a 2007cc stroker motor after having a dual relief case machined by Car Craft in Riverside. Into this he slotted a 78mm Bugpack crank and H-beam rods, together with an Engle 120 cam and Magnum straight cut cam gears. When it came to the all-important heads, Victor called up the guys at Brothers Machine Shop and ordered a pair of their D-port heads equipped with 40 and 35.5mm valve sets. Set up at a useable 8.5:1 compression ratio and sucking through a pair of EMPI HPMX carbs, this lot made a useful 148bhp at the fly, a boost of some 94bhp over the output of his car's original hot 1500S.

To make the most of this, Victor chose to spec a gearbox with hardened keys, steel shift forks, welded third and fourth gear sets, a Super Diff and 3.88:1 ring and pinion, as well as short chromoly axles to keep the wheels tucked.

Richie's 'box is similar, but with a 0.82 fourth gear and 4.125 ring and pinion for a few extra motorway, sorry, make that highway legs. Bolted up to his, however, is a pro-built 1776 from Chico Performance Racing in Arcadia, CA, based around a DPR Machine 69mm crank, VW rods and one of Chico's TM-10 cams. With the stock VW Mexico dual-port heads bolted down for a mildly increased 7.8:1 compression ratio and dual baby Webers, this unit has almost exactly double the power of the stock 1500 unit that came in the car. More noticeable when driving, however, must be the motor's improved torque curve which, allied to the taller fourth and final drive, must make this Notch more of a dream to drive than they already are.

**"mild custom with a definite nod to the factory"**

## Defining features

Again referring back to our earlier appraisal of 'the GFK Look', we noted one of the defining features of club cars was: "no body mods, but meticulous attention to detail restorations, accessories *de rigueur* and stock seats with stock, factory style re-trims." In other words, essentially concours restorations, with a few added cool points that set them apart from the restorers. And though I stand by this statement to this day, and Victor's car is a perfect example, it's immediately clear looking at Richie's car that doesn't have to be the case. The closest you could get to a brown Notch off the showroom floor was a Nutria one and, as wonderful as that colour is, it's no British Leyland brown (forgive me the little in-joke for our British readers). However, it wasn't always going to be like this. Remember we said the car had been painted twice? Well, here's what Richie had to say about that: "The car was first painted Pearl White, but it had too many flaws so I took the car to my homie Danny Olmeda and we changed the colour and it came out great." Following on from the custom-mix colour, into the repainted 'shell has gone a full custom interior in biscuit-coloured Nappa leather. Though it looks far from stock at first glance, closer inspection reveals the work of Julio Auto Upholstery in Highland Park, CA is surprisingly close to stock, with the same forms in the door panels, a similar number of pleats in the seats and a definite nod to the interior it replaces. In some ways, I guess that kinda sums up the whole GFK approach – mild custom with a definite nod to the factory.

### TECH INFO

**ENGINE:** 1776cc pancake motor, DPR crank, VW rods, CPR TM10 cam, VW 043 heads; 7.8:1 CR, dual Weber 34ICT carbs, 85bhp
**GEARBOX:** 4-speed with 0.82 fourth and 4.125 ring and pinion
**SUSPENSION:** Custom built Type 1 beam with adjusters, KYB shocks all round
**BRAKES:** AC Industries wide-5 disc brakes; stock rear drums
**WHEELS:** Chromed EMPI 5-spoke replicas

It's always difficult to explain why certain clubs attain a worldwide status when clearly there are hundreds of other VW clubs around the world doing a similar thing, but a lot of it comes down to just one word – quality. Throw in that other q-word, quantity, and things start to become a little more clear, for it's a rare thing to find a large quantity of high quality in one place, yet, like the DKP in Cal Look circles, the German Folks have managed to stay at the forefront of the Resto Cal movement for as long as there has been a Resto Cal movement and, if they keep turning out cars like this, there's no doubt they'll continue to be a tough act to follow. ■

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# Don’t miss…

## *Camper&Bus* feature Bus to be at the show

We’re pleased to announce Carl Pointon’s twin sliding door Late Bay (see picture to the right) will be on display at this year’s show. It was a feature Bus in our January 2014 issue so, if you want a sneak peak, look at pages 54-58 of that issue and read all about it.

## 40 years of California Look

Is it really 40 years since the *Bay City Rollers* topped the charts and the term Cal Look was first used in print? Well, yes it is, and we aim to celebrate this 40-year milestone with a special display – not of bizarre, high-waistband trousers and tight-fitting v-neck jumpers, but of some of the definitive examples of Cal Look cars from the last four decades. They will illustrate the development of this genre from original ’70’s US-built cars through British and European cars inspired by those early Californian examples. Some of these cars have been featured in *VolksWorld* over the years, others have never been seen at the show before. If you’re a fan of the California Look, this is going to be display not to be missed.

## First weekend away of the year

Booking your shows for the 2015 season? Why not make The *VolksWorld* Show your first weekend away?

Camping tickets are selling fast, so don’t delay. To make your camping as comfortable as possible, we have lots of toilets, hot showers with power points for hair dryers and for charging mobile ’phones. A family bar will be serving hot and cold food all weekend and laying on some music for your entertainment on the Saturday night. Arrive from 13.00 on Friday and stay all weekend for just £27* for the family.

*Show entry tickets need to be purchased separately when buying a camping ticket.

## International swapmeet

One on the highlights of The *VolksWorld* Show is the Karmann Konnection swapmeet. Situated on the first floor, you will find over 100 private individuals selling hard-to-find VW parts, literature and memorabilia. If you are restoring a classic VW, put a ‘must-attend’ note in your diary for this.

If you are a private individual interested in booking a swapmeet table, call Andy at Karmann Konnection on 01702 340613 (no trade).

## Clubs from all round Europe

We have been getting lots of feedback from those clubs attending the show, and it appears everybody is putting in a special effort for this year’s show. We are pleased to welcome RothFink this year, who have promised us a very special display of cars and Vans they say will rival the show vehicles inside, so look out for them on the Grandstand Apron.

Clubs attending are now listed on the website, so take a look to see if your favourite is coming.

## 60 years of the Karmann Ghia

We have just received some new pictures of the cars coming to the show from the Karmann museum in Germany to help us celebrate 60 years of the Karmann Ghia, and they look even better than our first sneak peek shots last month. Despite their rarity, these cars are not trailer queens, and are all in fully working order and are taken out of the factory once in a while for burn around the streets of Osnabrück. Maybe when VW are not looking, we will get a chance to have a quick trip up and down Esher High Street in the original 1953 Karmann Ghia prototype, or a never-before-seen 1962 design study. How cool would that be? Also on show will be the one and only Type 34 Razor Edge fastback that, sadly, never made it past the prototype stage. Special thanks must go to VW Heritage founder, David Ward, for arranging to have these cars displayed in the UK for the very first time.

## Cool Flo Entertainment Arena

Show sponsors, Cool Flo, have once again come up trumps on the entertainment front and have put together a mouth-watering mix of live music, entertainment, a wicked collection of classic air-cooled VWs, plus the old favourite half-pipe, built especially for the show. The Cool Flo team riders will be doing BMX and skate demos throughout the weekend with special guest riders in attendance, so be sure to check out the schedule when you arrive so you don’t miss any of the action. The Cool Flo Arena is situated on the Red Brick Road. It’s always a great place to meet, have a drink and chill for a couple of hours.

Cool Buses

Hot Bugs

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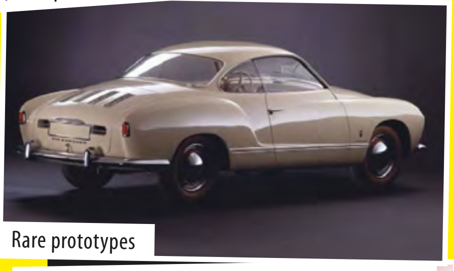
VW swapmeet



Rare prototypes

Cool Flo Entertainment Arena **Photo:** Neil Vincent

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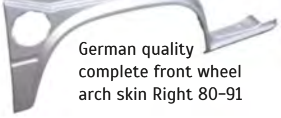

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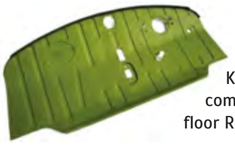

K80405
Klassic fab complete cab floor RHD 68-69

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# Boss of Beetles

With its racy looks, the Yellow Black Racer was the pinnacle of the Beetle family, but the looks didn't match the performance. Thomas Zeltner decided to do what VW should have done in the first place

**Words** Georg Otto **Photos** Sven Zimmerman

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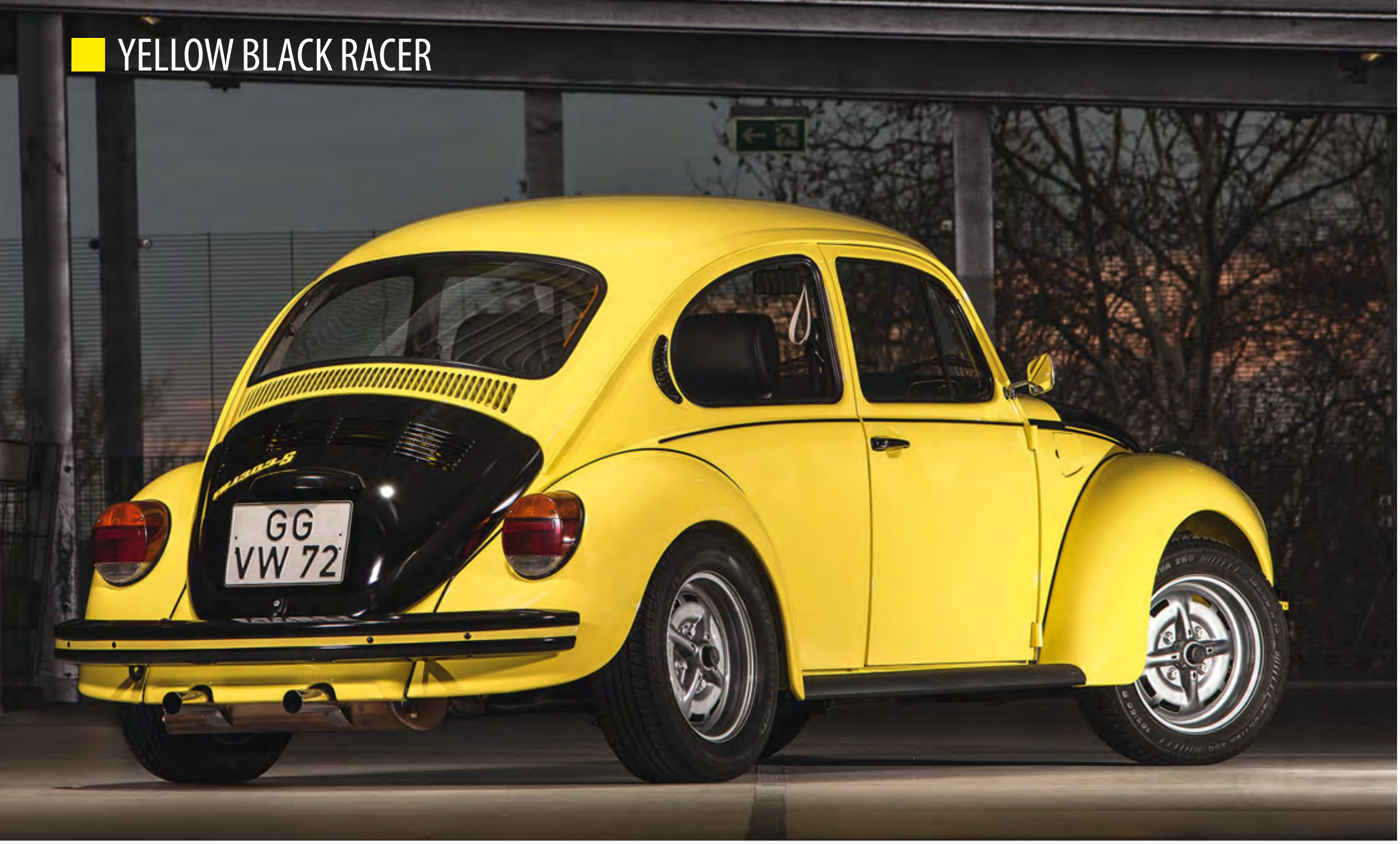


Believe it or not, this 1303 is lowered 40mm all round, but still retains the stock nose-up look

It wasn't all good news for Volkswagen in the early '70s. After a record-breaking year in 1971, sales figures dropped alarmingly. Customers, it seemed, just didn't accept the 1302 with its bulbous bonnet and MacPherson strut front suspension, as good as the company knew it to be. And there was further bad news to come from the USA. A new law was scheduled to regulate the minimum distance between driver and windscreen, which the flat 'screen Beetle couldn't fulfil, and the new generation of water-cooled VWs – the Passat, Scirocco and Golf – weren't ready yet. Volkswagen was under pressure, and solved this problem in August 1972 with a curved windscreen for the old Beetle. And so the 1303 was born. Together with its new chunky, padded dashboard and 50bhp 1600cc engine, the new model was truly a 'Super Beetle'.

> “the only time VW (albeit subtly) invited customers to modify their products”

The market accepted the latest Volkswagen model and the launch was accompanied by promotional measures such as a limited special edition, the Yellow Black Racer. It was launched in January 1973, and the 3,500 special edition cars sold in no time. Their trademark aggressive Saturn Yellow (L13M) and matt black (L41) bonnet and engine lid, made them look very sporty compared to their bourgeois siblings. While the bumpers came painted in black with yellow rubber stripes, the headlight rings, indicator trims and rear view mirrors were always chromed, although many owners painted them black afterwards. Wider 5.5J x 15 pressed steel sport wheels were wrapped with 175/70-15 Pirelli Cinturato tyres and gave the Yellow Black Racers better handling. The interior was upgraded with a sports steering wheel and matching bucket seats. Sadly, the looks weren't backed up by a more powerful engine. Rumour has it a hot motor was in the plan from the beginning but, with the first oil crisis looming on the horizon, VW chairman, Rudolf Leiding, gave his blessing to visual improvements only. Cue interesting fact: all Yellow Black Racers came with a list of addresses of recommended VW tuners. This was the only time VW (albeit subtly) invited customers to modify their cars. And that is exactly what 53-year-old Thomas Zeltner did with his Beetle, though not when it was new in 1973, but close to 40 years later.

## TECH INFO

**BODY:** Stock, but with removable rear valance, slotted front valance and quick release decklid

**ENGINE:** 2733cc Type 4; 82mm AA crank; 103mm AA pistons and cylinders; modified Type 4 heads with 46 and 42mm valves; 48IDF Webers; Ahnendorp fan housing

**GEARBOX:** Rhino case; Super Diff; 3.44 ring and pinion; 1.04 straight cut fourth gear

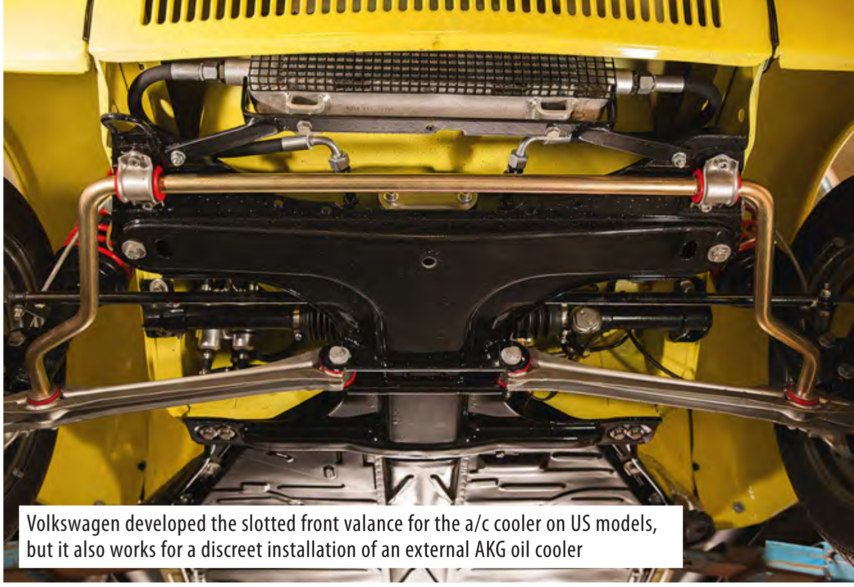
**SUSPENSION:** Kerscher -40mm springs, Koni dampers and inserts

**WHEELS AND TYRES:** Stock 5.5J x 15 ET26 VW sports wheels; 185/60 Continental and 205/60 BF Goodrich tyres

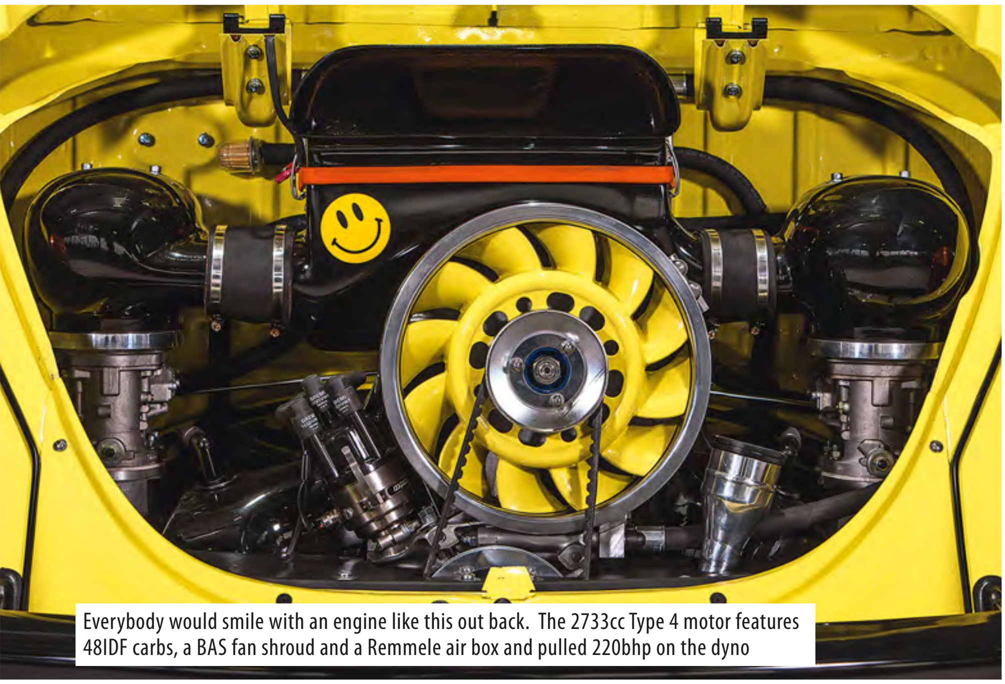
It all started with a race between Thomas and his son, Marcus. At the DAS Drag Day in 2009, Zeltner senior and his heavy 1303 convertible with its 2.0-litre Type 4 engine had no chance against junior's lightweight 1200 Beetle, also equipped with a 1971cc Type 4 motor. Things couldn't remain that way. Thomas had to build a more competitive Bug, and he knew exactly which base car to choose. “The only car that came into question was a 1303 Yellow Black Racer,” explained Thomas. “I knew it would take some time to find one, as they are really sought after in the motherland of the German Look style.” But, in 2010, he found a promising small ad in a newspaper. The car was located in Kiel, some 375 miles from his hometown of Gross-Gerau in southern Germany. Full of hope, he attached a trailer to his tow car and started out on the seven-hour trip to the North Sea. But when he laid eyes on the 1303, it was a bitter disappointment. The car was a far cry from what had been described in the advert and on the 'phone. Downhearted, he drove seven hours home again with an empty trailer, but determined not to give up.

>

At the front Kerscher disc brakes are accompanied by lowering springs from the same company

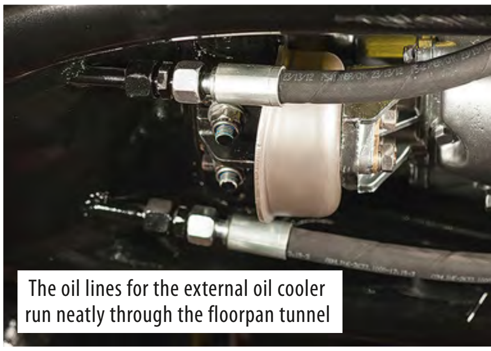


Volkswagen developed the slotted front valance for the a/c cooler on US models, but it also works for a discreet installation of an external AKG oil cooler



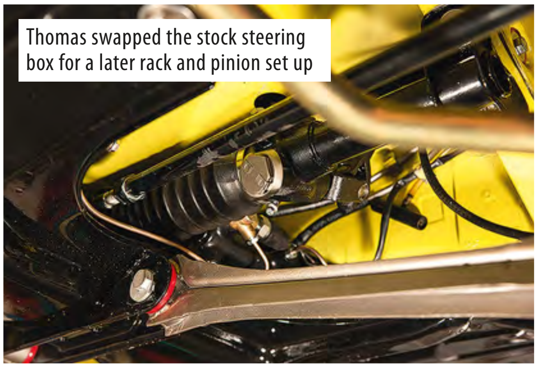
Everybody would smile with an engine like this out back. The 2733cc Type 4 motor features 48IDF carbs, a BAS fan shroud and a Remmele air box and pulled 220bhp on the dyno

Adjustable torque bar kit helps reinforce the engine and transmission mounts



The oil lines for the external oil cooler run neatly through the floorpan tunnel

VW Rhino transmission cases are 40 per cent stronger than stock

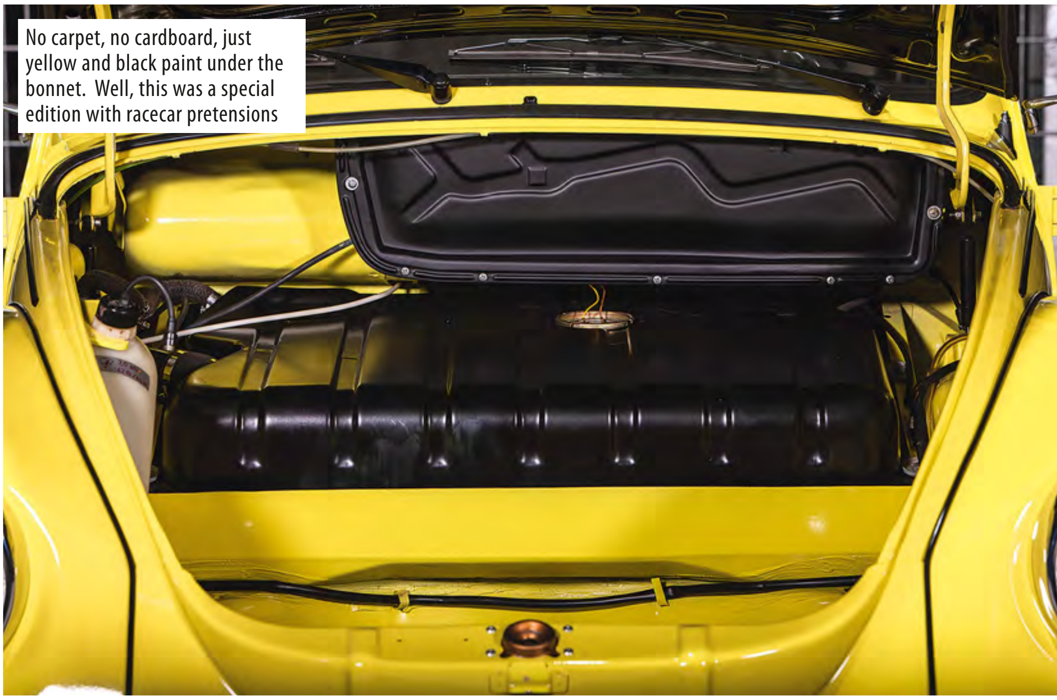


Thomas swapped the stock steering box for a later rack and pinion set up

Air box keeps down the induction noise

Dual Pierburg fuel pumps feed the thirsty 48IDF Weber carbs

Kerscher disc brakes feature on the rear as well, along with more Koni dampers



No carpet, no cardboard, just yellow and black paint under the bonnet. Well, this was a special edition with racecar pretensions

> “I once cut up a Yellow Black Racer (I know...)”

Once home, he informed his VW network about his quest for a Yellow Black Racer and, finally, it was crowned with success. Well, sort of. Thomas Urban, a member of the Käfernarren Jagstfeld Club offered him a Yellow Black Racer in need of restoration. Thomas recalls: “I have been into the hobby for some decades, but I have never seen a 1303 ’shell that was so far beyond repair. But hey, I finally found a genuine Yellow Black Racer for the right price, and just 75 miles away.” The next step then was finding a body in good condition. And not just one from any old 1303, it had to be from a late 1972 or early ’73 car to be authentic. In the end, Michael Haunschild from BugSpeed came to the rescue, offering Thomas a ’73 body with almost no corrosion.

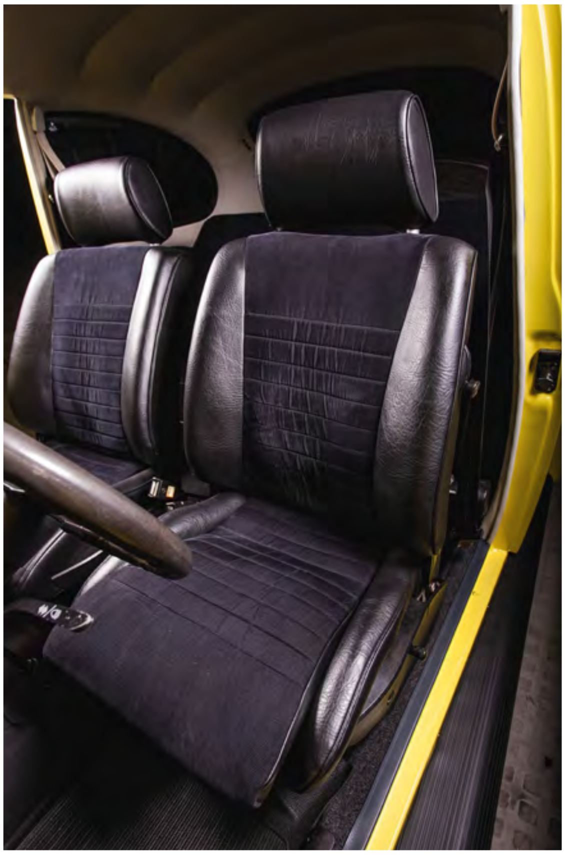
## Main ingredients

Now, with the main ingredients collected, the restoration process could begin. Like most of us Thomas also started with the chassis. First, he modified the framehead for later rack and pinion steering, which was standard for all 1303s from 1974 onwards. He also upgraded the brakes to Kerscher discs all round and installed two oil lines in the floorpan tunnel for the proposed front-mounted oil cooler. Next on the agenda was a torque bar kit, which reinforces the engine and transmission mounts. After the trial fit of all the components, Thomas disassembled the undercarriage and had it powder coated black, then re-installed everything, along with a 22mm anti-roll bar, Kerscher -40mm front coil springs and re-positioned spring plates at the rear. Most importantly for the look, he added a set of 5.5J x 15 VW steel wheels though, instead of the original 175/70 tyres, chose 185/60 Continental and 205/60 BF Goodrich rubber for improved handling.

With the chassis looking good, Thomas started to work on the body: “There were just some little rust spots, almost nothing. I spent the most time fitting a slotted front apron and a removable rear one. That was it really.” His friend, Robert Braunsberg, a painter by trade, took on the challenge to dress the body in its original Saturn Yellow and matt black livery, while Thomas busied himself searching for the missing interior parts. “I once cut up a Yellow Black Racer (I know…) and had some parts like the steering wheel and a good, uncut dashboard, but I had to find all the other parts.” It took a while, but eventually he located a set of original seats and door panels and had his good friend and coach

^ Headlight rings, indicator housings and mirrors were always chrome on original Yellow Black Racers, although many owners painted them black

< Besides two VDO gauges for oil temperature and pressure and the rev counter, the interior is bone stock, right up to the sports steering wheel



> Yellow Black Racers always came with headrest-equipped reclining sports seats, covered in a combination of black vinyl and cloth

“a genuine, dyno-tested 220bhp”

trimmer, Andreas Krug, upholster all the parts with stock black vinyl and cloth. Together with the NOS carpet kit, the interior now looks like it would have in a Yellow Black Racer in 1973. The only difference is the additional gauges, which are the only hint there is more going on in the engine compartment than just 1584cc and 50bhp.

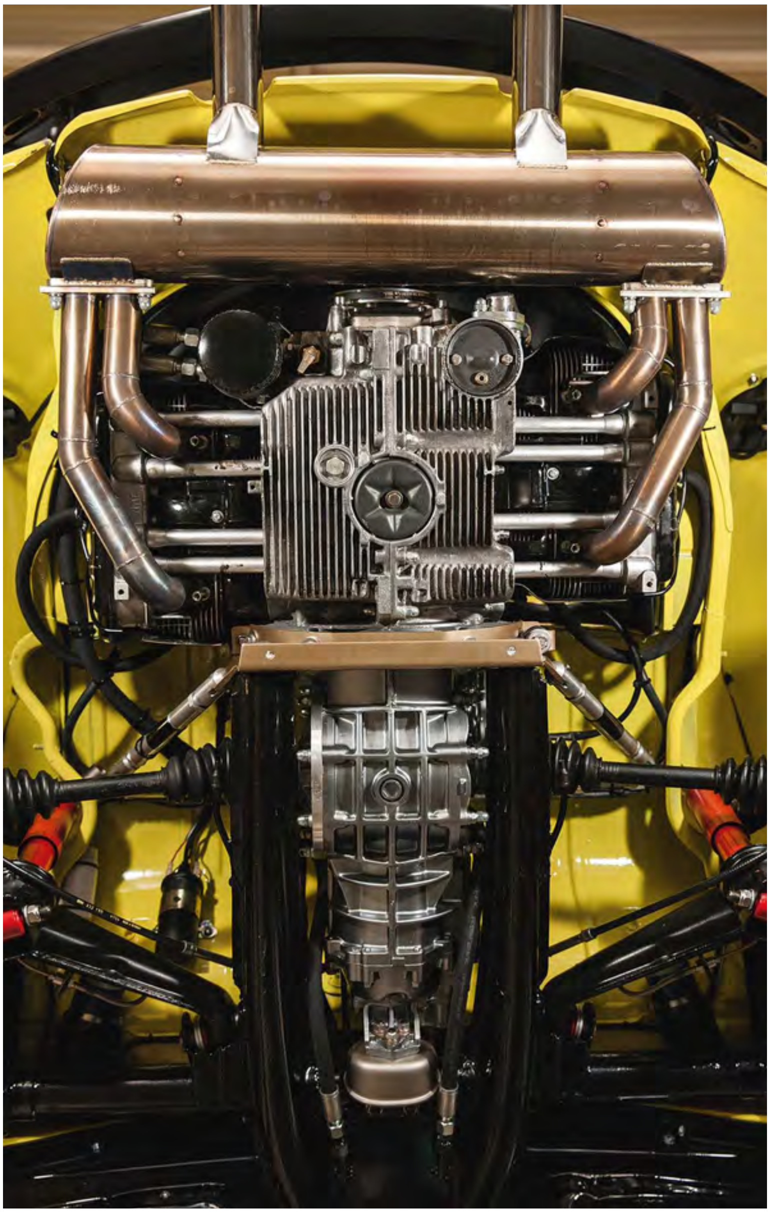
## The German way

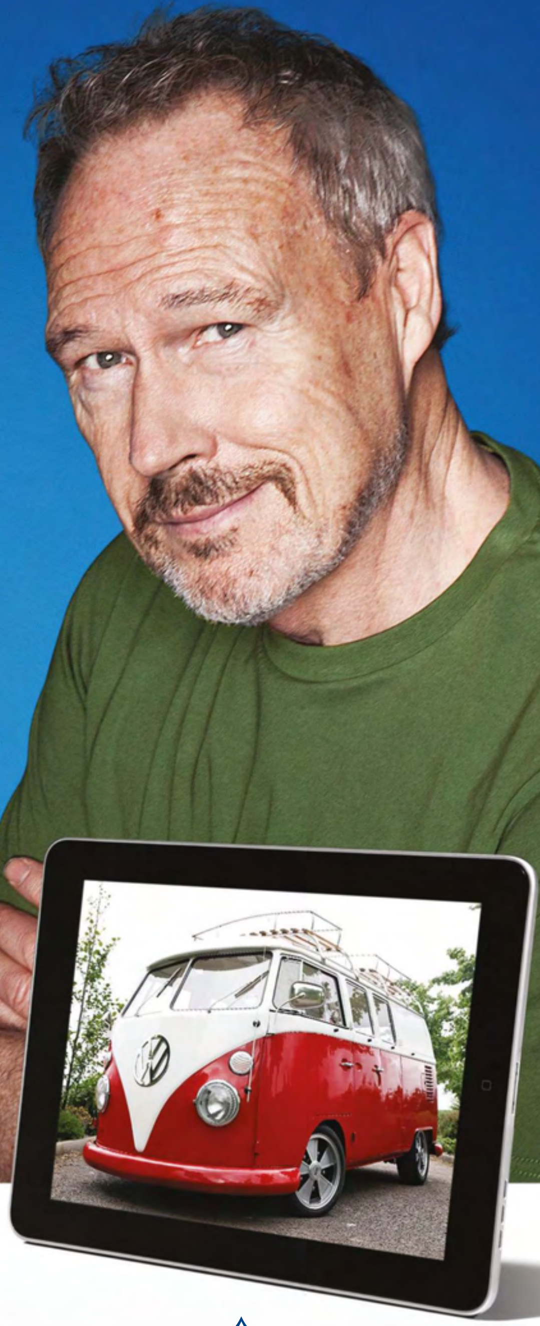
This kind of displacement is only achievable if you start with a Type 4 engine, And to many, this is the only suitable engine for a real German Look Beetle. The stock Type 4 case was first clearanced for an 82mm AA Performance Products crank, then bored to fit the AA cylinders and 103mm pistons for a displacement of 2733cc. The ported and polished Type 4 heads were fitted with 46mm intake and 42mm exhaust valves. A Web Cams 86c cam controls those valves, while a modified 32mm Type 1 oil pump takes care of oiling. Ahnendorp delivered the housing for the 12-blade Porsche 911 fan, while a Remmele air box covers two Weber 48IDF carbs on match-ported Ahnendorp manifolds. With a 1-2-3 ignition distributor, Bosch coil and a Vintage Speed / Remmele hybrid exhaust, the package produced a genuine, dyno-tested 220bhp. This necessitated not only a heavy duty 210mm Fichtel & Sachs clutch, but also a built gearbox. Buddy Stephan Turner, well-known in the German air-cooled VW scene, took care of the latter, equipping an aluminium Rhino case with straight cut third and fourth gears, a chromoly bearing retainer, Super Diff and a heavy duty side cover.

Depending on how you look at it, all these modifications are a continuation of what Volkswagen originally planned, but never put into operation. Thomas’ Yellow Black Racer looks like a stocker, but now has the performance everybody expects from this racy looking special edition Beetle. And how did he do at the quarter mile? Well, let’s just say he won the race against his son easily. Though that has prompted junior to upgrade his Beetle, and now there’s a Subaru turbo engine in the garage… ■

^ Thomas’ Yellow Black Racer looks like a stocker, so much so that no one would assume this innocuous Bug packs a whopping 220bhp

> Underside detailing is intense. Note how the Type 4 exhaust exits out of the bottom of the heads, unlike a Type 1 engine





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# The Dunlop truck

Any original paint, signwritten Commercial VW is a desirable vehicle today. Add in the catchword ‘Barndoor’ and the stakes don’t get higher, they go stratospheric

**Words** Matt Keene **Photos** thru-a-lupe photographic

The Barndoor Single Cab is a rare beast today, and much cherished by VW enthusiasts across the globe. Produced from August 25 1952 until the end of February 1955, fewer than 16,000 Barndoor-era Pick-Ups were built, so finding one in *any* condition today is no mean feat. To put that into context, whilst there were indeed plenty of Split Screen Pick-Ups built from March 1955 until production of the Split Screen series ceased in July of 1967 – a total of 375,669 to be precise – the amount of Barndoor-era Pickups account for less than 5% of the total production of Split Screen trucks.

But what’s all this Barndoor-era fuss, I hear you cry? Well, like any classic car marque, the earliest production models tend to be the most desirable, mainly due to their quirky little details that get collectors all hot under the collar. Barndoor Buses are no exception to this and, despite being

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“treated the whole underside and treasure chest area to some detailed prep and top coat”

^ Stance has been suitably enhanced with the addition of 15-inch Beetle wheels, low-profile tyres, dropped spindles and a straight axle conversion. It’s gone down in the world since these pics were taken though

crude and even more rudimentary than later Splits, are full of character and charm. Essentially, the earlier the Bus, the more basic it was from the factory. Volkswagen constantly improved production methods over the years, modifying and changing components they felt weren’t up to scratch. Even in the relatively short span from 1950 to 1955 there are hundreds of little amendments and changes that keep today’s part number freaks on their toes.

## Time of the month

Across the entire VW Transporter range, things changed dramatically in March of 1955. Production of the ‘updated’ range of Transporters commenced on the first day of the month. The VW stylists gave the Transporter a makeover, while the engineers pushed for numerous general modifications, perhaps the most obvious being changing the size of the engine compartment lid from gigantic – hence the term Barndoor – to one about half the size. It was lighter, easier to produce, yet still considered adequate for the job. Another significant change to the Transporter’s profile was the addition of a ‘peak’ to the roof at the front of the vehicle, with the addition of fresh air intakes for the cab. It is these two changes that fundamentally define pre- and post-March ’55 Volkswagen Buses – except a Pick-Up, of course, which never had space for the huge Barndoor engine lid in the first place.

As I mentioned at the beginning, production of the Pick-Up didn’t begin until mid-1952, even though there was great demand for VW to introduce a *Pritsche* (German for Pick-Up) to its range. The reason for the delay was the massive re-tooling required to build it. But once offered for general sale, the Pick-Up quickly became a success and accounted for approximately 20% of annual Transporter sales. Countries far and wide ordered them in their droves, and both individuals and companies soon put them to use on farms, building sites and general purpose shop use, often with signwriting and logos advertising the company’s name, and the services they offered.

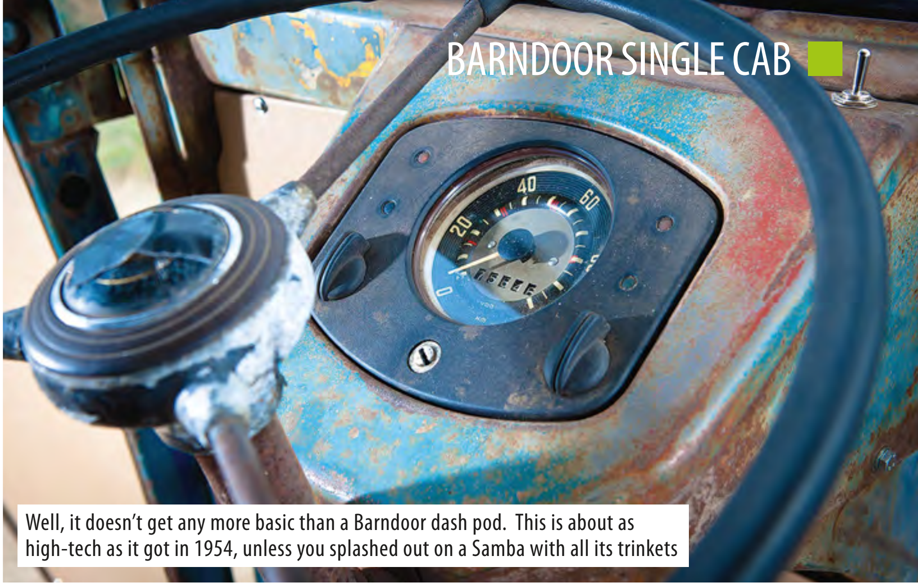
### TECH INFO

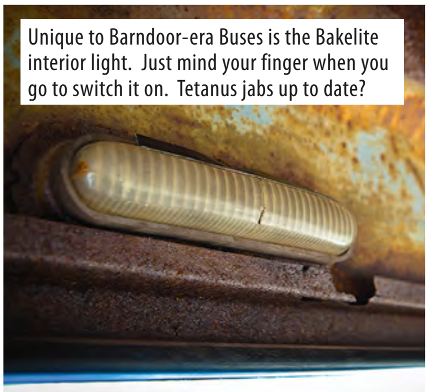
**BODY:** Stock 1954 Barndoor Pick-Up
**ENGINE:** Later 1600cc Type 1 twin port
**GEARBOX:** VW Beetle swing axle with 4.125 ring and pinion
**SUSPENSION:** Type 1 dropped spindles, straight-axle conversion
**WHEELS AND TYRES:** Stock ’66 Beetle 15-inch steels; 155/60-15 fronts, 185/65-15 rears

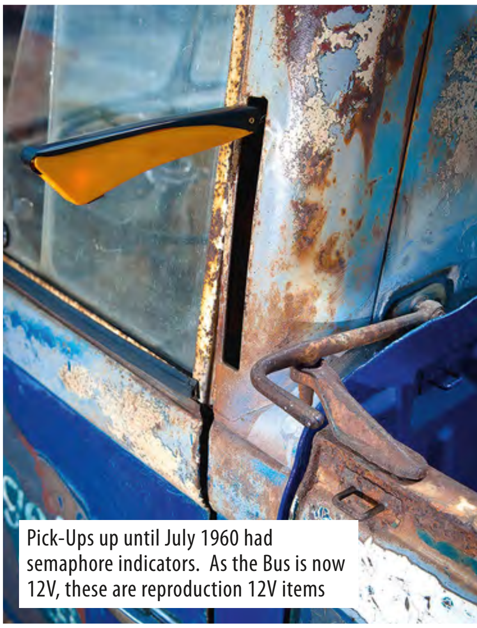
Which brings us nicely to our feature Bus here, an original paint (well, mostly…) 1954 Pick-Up with its original signwriting advertising an erstwhile tyre company from Luleå, Sweden. Known amongst UK Barndoor aficionados as the ‘Dunlop truck’, this Bus had done the rounds before ending up in Simon Kerr of Absolute VW’s hands.

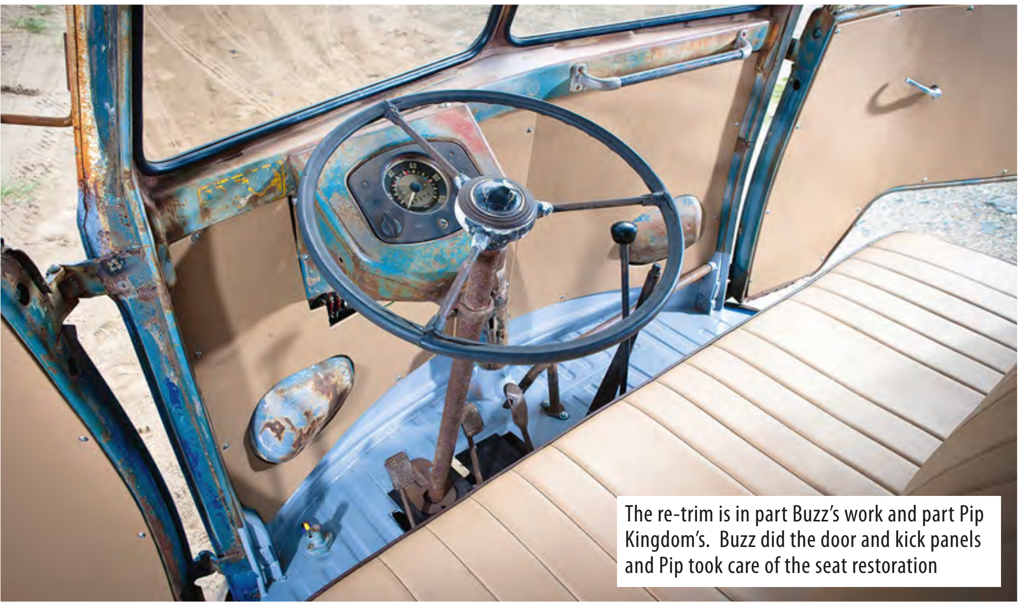
Originally imported by Graham at FBI VW well over a decade ago, the Bus passed through the hands of Jim Merrin, Dean Barton, Tom Verney, Di Watkins and Buzz Burrell before reaching Simon. It was Buzz, however, who did most of the work to put the Bus back on the road, so we’ll concentrate our efforts on him. Buzz: “When I got the Bus, it was a rolling project. Previous owners had done bits here and there – the lower front panel, inner and outer sills, crossmembers and outriggers had all been replaced at some point, but it was a long way off being roadworthy.

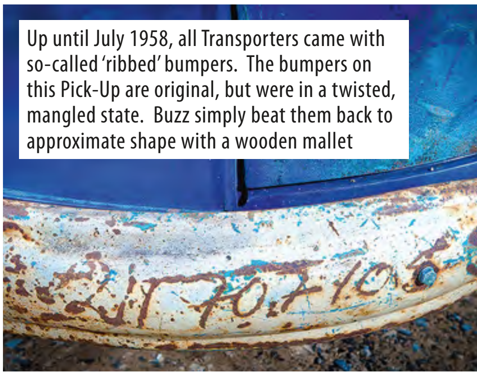
“To make things easier for myself, I cut the old load bed off and removed the top bed top hats. This allowed me to access the lower floor area within the span of the treasure chest [the lockable compartment beneath the load bed on a Split Pick-Up].” Whilst Buzz was in the thick of it, he replaced all the jacking points, the lower floor, the top hats for the top bed and did some major repairs to the bed bulkhead area. He then turned his attention to the cab floor and replaced that, along with the wheelarch ‘dog legs’, using new panels made by Rick at Schofields. With the load bed still off, he then treated the whole underside and treasure chest area to some detailed prep and several coats of 2-pack satin grey top coat. Once all was cured, he carefully stitched on

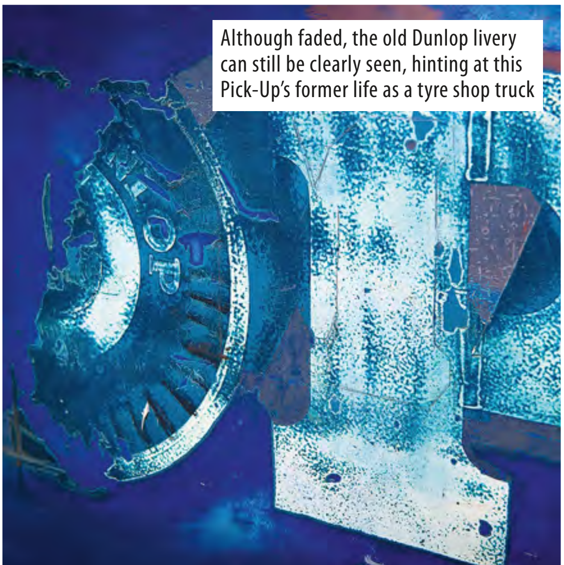

Well, it doesn't get any more basic than a Barndoor dash pod. This is about as high-tech as it got in 1954, unless you splashed out on a Samba with all its trinkets

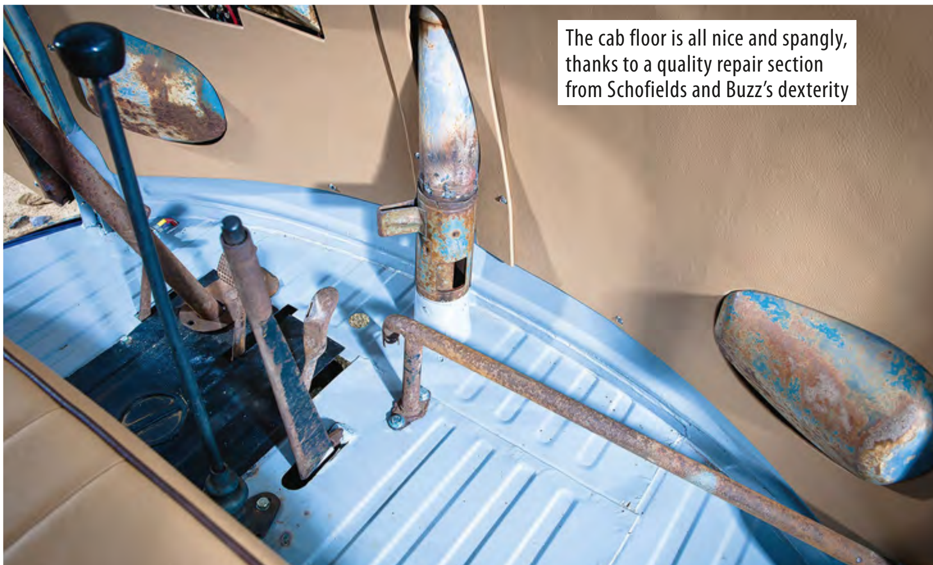

Unique to Barndoor-era Buses is the Bakelite interior light. Just mind your finger when you go to switch it on. Tetanus jabs up to date?


Pick-Ups up until July 1960 had semaphore indicators. As the Bus is now 12V, these are reproduction 12V items


The re-trim is in part Buzz's work and part Pip Kingdom's. Buzz did the door and kick panels and Pip took care of the seat restoration


Up until July 1958, all Transporters came with so-called 'ribbed' bumpers. The bumpers on this Pick-Up are original, but were in a twisted, mangled state. Buzz simply beat them back to approximate shape with a wooden mallet


Although faded, the old Dunlop livery can still be clearly seen, hinting at this Pick-Up's former life as a tyre shop truck


The cab floor is all nice and spangly, thanks to a quality repair section from Schofields and Buzz's dexterity

Däckbolaget
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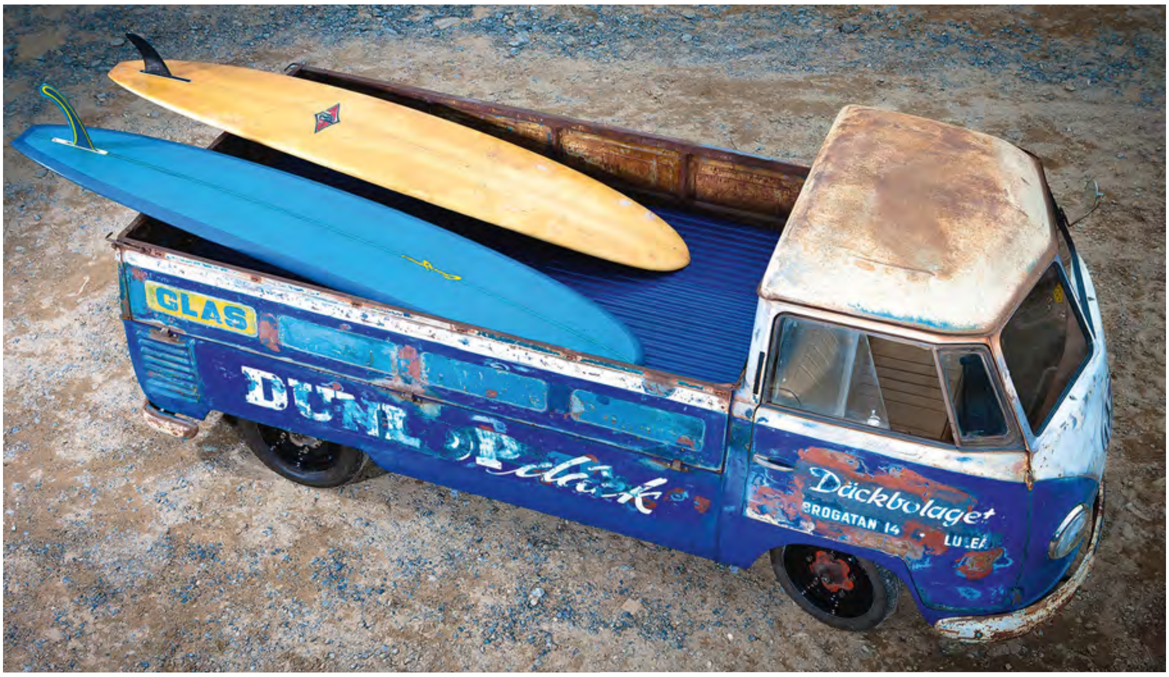
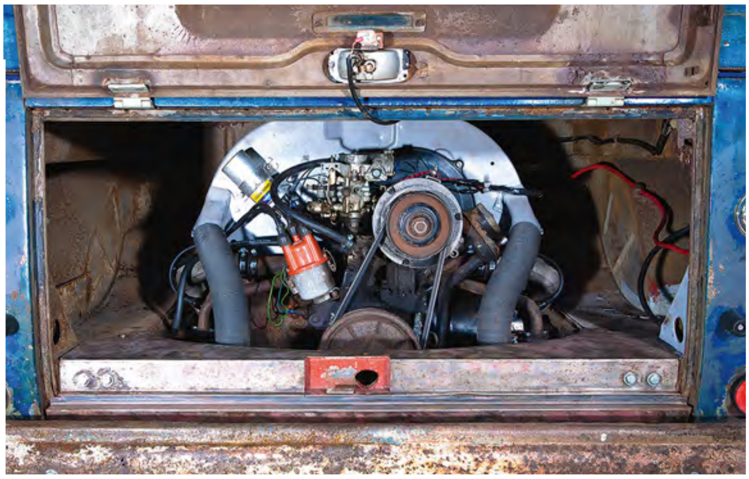
> “the Pick-Up now cruises nicely at motorway speeds”



If ever there was a VW designed to haul longboards, it's a Single Cab Pick-Up. The board at the top appears to be an original Bear. Nice

Nothing fancy in the engine compartment, just 1584cc's worth of late model Type 1 powerplant, which is sufficient for a daily driver. Watch this space though…

The so-called 'treasure chest' is where you will find the petrol tank and additional dry storage space for 20 square feet of assorted paraphernalia



Unique to the Pick-Up is the sharp angled ribbed rear bumper. Try finding one of these at your local swapmeet!

It's a little battered and weathered, and the original paint has been blown in in places, but that all makes this one of the coolest rides around these days

a new load bed, already painted on the underside.

Buzz, being a long-term VW nut, understood the value of the mostly original paint and signwriting. "I wanted to preserve the patina as much as I could. This meant I had to be very careful when welding and blending in paint."

Buzz then turned his attention to the running gear. "The Bus already came with Type 1 dropped spindles and brakes on the front and a straight-axle conversion at the rear, so it sat at a respectable height. I didn't really want to mess with its stance, so I just rebuilt all of the brakes with new items from Machine 7." Whilst he was at it, he also treated the Pick-Up to a dual-circuit master cylinder and, with the help of Ian Merchant, a new set of rigid brake lines.

For motivation, Buzz kept the later 1600 twin-port engine that came with the truck. "It seemed to run fine, so I serviced it and spruced up the tinware with a few coats of paint," he told us. He also fitted a four-into-one merged header and modified a Beetle turbo muffler to fit the Bus. Matched to a 1970's Beetle 4.12 final drive gearbox, the Pick-Up now cruises nicely at motorway speeds without being overstressed – most certainly not something you could ever say of a stock Barndoor Bus!

Inside the cab of any Barndoor Split there is little in the way of creature comforts. There's a bench seat, some door cards and kick panels and that's about it. The only trim was a bit of vinyl on the seat. Buzz tackled the door and kick cards, making new items and covering them in a beige vinyl, but for the seat he turned to Pip Kingdom at Devon Custom Trimming. She restored the seat to its former glory, covering it in the same beige vinyl as the door cards.

## Undeniably cool

With that, the Pick-Up was technically ready for the road again. An MoT and subsequent registration meant Buzz could finally start enjoying the fruits of his labours, which he did all summer of 2014, using it for trips to the beach and the like. However, it soon became apparent that, whilst the Pick-Up was undeniably cool, it just wasn't practical for families and Buzz has a wife, Marion, and two daughters (Holly, 11, and Ellie, 7,) who also enjoy Volkswagens. Trying to cram four people into the front of a VW Pick-Up was never going to happen, so the decision was made to move the Pick-Up on and enjoy their Barndoor Kombi with Westfalia Camping Box interior instead. Poor souls!

Happily, this story continues on a good note as the Pick-Up is now in daily use at Absolute VWs and has had a little makeover, although not paint-wise. It has been slammed further and now sports Der Steiner Rad wheels, a four-inch narrowed beam and has been tubbed to allow tyre clearance at the front. A steering box raise is also on the cards, as is a big motor. Sounds like fun to me! ■

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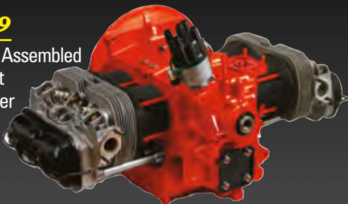

### GREEN ENGINE *DIY PRICE: £999*

The same specification as the 'Gold' engine but this one also has a 009 distributor fitted.

### SUPER GREEN PLUS *DIY: £1,449*

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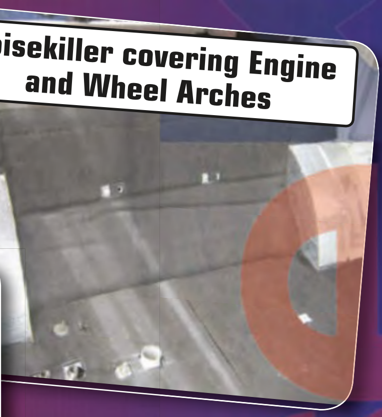

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# What's the rush?

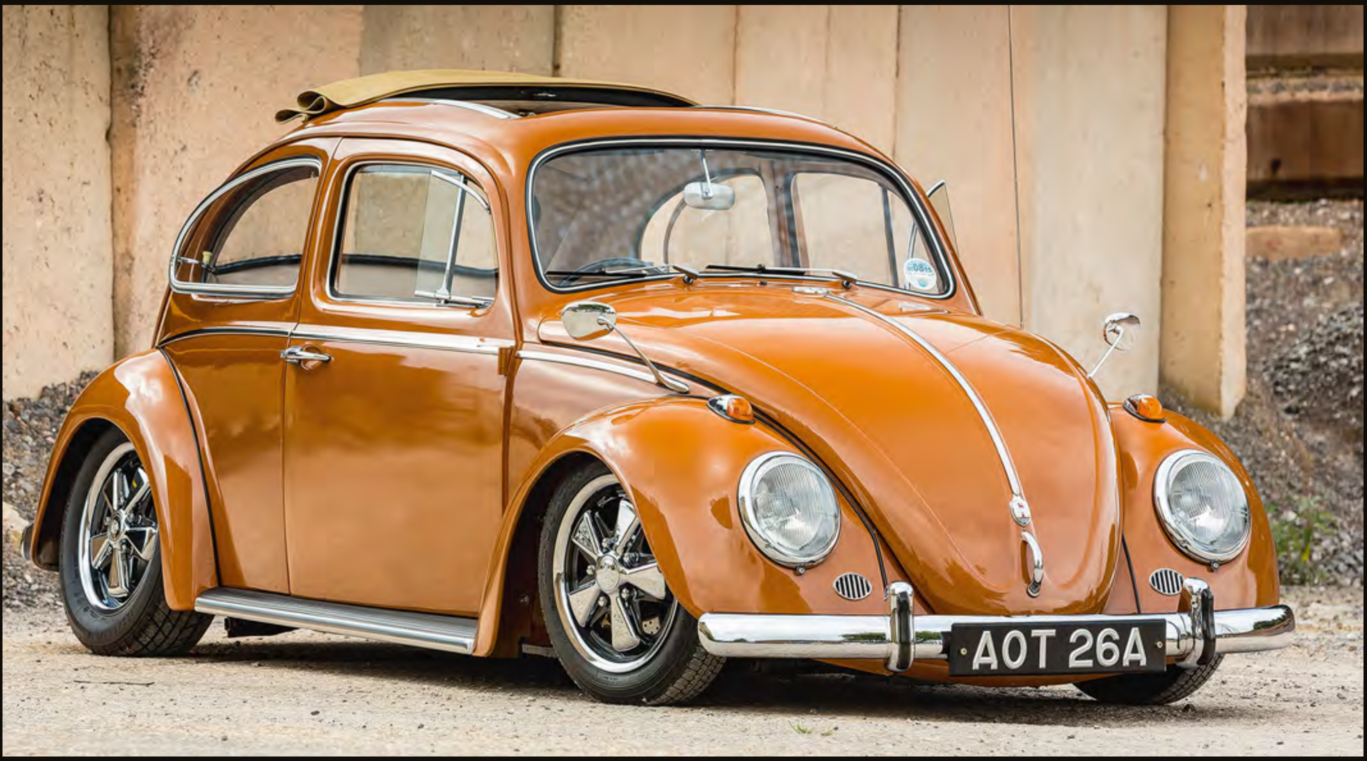
When this project started, the plan was to build the first German Folks-style Resto Cal Bug in the UK. That was 15 years ago…

**Words** Ivan McCutcheon **Photos** Dan Pullen

There's no doubt about it, this car has been a long time coming. The project was started with gusto in 1999, but faltered when the guy building it became disheartened. I suppose we should start the ball rolling by introducing 'the guy' as Rob Gwinnet from Poole, Dorset. Rob has been into VWs a long time and owned many Bugs and Buses over the years. His interests also include vintage Porsches and custom bikes. He's into style and design, and this is bolstered by the fact he studied at Bournemouth and Poole College of Art and Design.

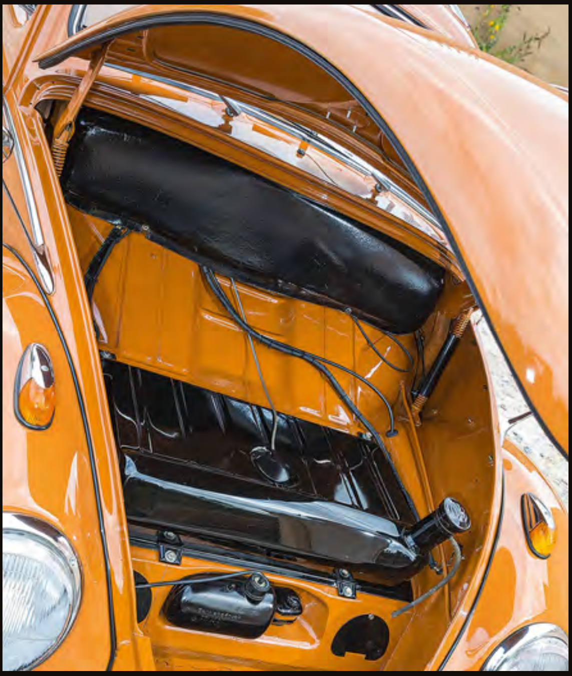
More recently, Rob worked in the air-conditioning business, until making the move to go it alone and restore classic cars under the name Dr. Ferdinands (www.drferdinands.co.uk). Unfortunately, setting up his own business means the car you see here had to be sold to help fund the set-up costs, but it was a tough call to part with it, especially after all the work Rob had put into it. That and the fact it's an original right-hand drive '63 Golde sunroof car. As anyone who's clued up on Beetle model history will tell you, 1963 was the last year you could buy a Deluxe Beetle with a ragtop.

Rob originally picked the '63 up at Stanford Hall in 1999. At the time it was



Additions include swan neck mirrors, Flat4 bumper overrider rubbers, detailed MWS Foosh and pop-out windows

in need of a lot of work, a real restoration project. Thinking back to that day, he told us: "I was first drawn to the car as it was sporting a set of original pop outs and I was after a set for the Oval I was finishing at the time. So I went over to check the car out. She had clearly seen better days, and had obviously had a hard life as both the front and back ends of her had been cut off Baja-stylee. And if this wasn't bad enough, she had been used for off-road racing so every panel had either a dent or scuff of some sort.



Under the bonnet it's nicely detailed. Engine breather hose as a wiring conduit is an idea we've not seen before

> "both the front and back ends had been cut off Baja-stylee"

"There was a lot of rust around the bottom of the car as it had been standing in a leaking barn for some time. So, all in all, she wasn't in a good way! After looking her over and convincing myself I didn't need another project, having almost finished one and now starting to have a social life again, I walked away with just the pop outs under my arm and left the little car to her impending fate." Obviously, if Rob had left it there, we wouldn't be featuring the car now, so what happened Rob? "Throughout the day, whilst walking around the show, I kept thinking about the little car as I had always wanted a ragtop. As the show came to an end, I walked back through the swapmeet and the ragtop was still there, so I was drawn back over to her again, as if by fate. Speaking to the seller, he told me he was intending to take the little car back home and cut her into pieces and sell her like that. Out of interest I asked him how much he wanted for the roof section as a crazy thought of letting it into my freshly painted Oval crept into my head. He told me he would sell the roof section and mechanism for £150, but for £200 I could have the whole car. As the car was complete with doors, engine lid and bonnet, all glass and switchgear, that sounded like a good deal to me, as there was more than that in parts alone if I broke it for spares. So, needless to say, I bought the whole car then and there and arranged to collect it the following weekend. Although he hadn't planned to buy another car, Rob's mind immediately went into overdrive. You see, he'd become hooked on a style of car we had been featuring in *VolksWorld* at the time that members of The Original German Folks VW Klub (GFK) were building over in California. These cars were the inspiration for Rob's rancid ragtop, and he decided he was going to build the first full on, GFK-style, Resto Cal car in the UK.

Rob chose contrasting colours for the interior. The carpets are by Newton Commercial, while the seats and panels were done by Gary Kybert at Car Interiors in Hampshire

## Out of sight, out of mind

First though, he had to finish the Oval, so work continued on that, during which time Rob told us, "The ragtop sat in a friend's single garage as I had no room for her at home. This was only supposed to be a temporary storage solution, but she ended up being forgotten

about and sitting there for two years. I guess it was one of those out of sight, out of mind kinda things." Understandably, after a couple of years, Rob's friend wanted his garage back, and once it was finally at his home the full extent of repairs needed was evaluated. It wasn't a small list, as you can imagine. Rob: "At that point in time, I didn't know how to weld or do any sort of bodywork, and had no extra money to pay anyone else to do the work. So, as I couldn't afford to get a restoration shop to do it, I decided my best option was to scrape enough money together to buy a welder and do it myself." A bold step, but it proved to be a great move as Rob was able to learn some valuable new skills in the process. He takes up the story again: "With a welder and grinder bought, I set to. The 'shell was braced and the rot cut out. This included both heater channels, a-posts, inner front wheelarches, rear quarters and heater channel end plates, along with countless other bits and pieces. You get the idea." Luckily, Rob was also breaking a '63 Beetle saloon he'd picked up, which proved to be a blessing as anything that could be recycled for the ragtop was. "It had new front and rear bumper hangers and valances that had been put on not long before I got the car, so the front and back were cut off this car and grafted onto the ragtop 'shell."

## TECH INFO

**BODY** 1963 RHD Deluxe sunroof Beetle.
**SUSPENSION** 4-inch narrowed beam with Sway-A-Ways made by owner; rear torsion bars turned; Mini front shocks; stock VW rears
**BRAKES** VW front discs cross drilled and with Porsche 5 x 130 PCD; VW calipers; standard VW rear drums re-drilled to 5 x 130 PCD
**WHEELS** 4.5 and 5.5 x 15 MWS Foosh
**TYRES** Firestone 125 x 15 front; Hankook 215/65 R 15 rears
**ENGINE** Rebuilt stock 1200cc
**INTERIOR** Re-trimmed stock-style in contrasting butterscotch vinyl; Newton Commercial carpets

## Outta time

Honing his skills along the way, things were going really well and the body was starting to look good. Rob: "I had set a deadline for the car to be done, but I was looking to buy somewhere to live with my girlfriend at the time. We eventually bought a lovely little place. The only downside was it was miles away from my garage where the car was being stored and also the house needed a fair bit of work itself. This meant no more free time to work on the ragtop, so the car sat again for a while, as I really wanted to finish what I had started and not just sell her on.

"After a while though, I realised I wasn't going to find the time, so I looked for someone local to finish the welding work and paint the car for me. I found a local shop and the car was transported over to them for completion. The 'shell was finished and the colour Porsche Sepia Brown chosen to finish the car in, as it had always been a favourite of mine. It's one of those colours you either love or hate. Rather like Marmite really," Well, personally, I like Marmite, but I love Porsche special order 415 Sepia Brown.

> "It's one of those colours you either love or hate. Rather like Marmite"

The body of Rob's ragtop was welded, prepped and painted as arranged, but then there was a bit of a problem, as he explains: "When I got the doors back, there were some paint reaction problems so they went back to be re-done. I ended up waiting and waiting for the doors to be put right, but the painter was dragging his feet." Partly as a result, and partly due to stuff going on in Rob's personal life, the project ended up shelved again. Over the next couple of years his attention went into buying other VWs, carrying out restos on some of them and generally not doing anything to the ragtop. Eventually though, the time came for the car to be completed. The doors were repainted and Rob steamed into the rebuild. As he puts it, "This car has been a long haul to get completed, and a struggle at times, but she is a car I always wanted to build and finish. I think that's the reason I have had her so long and not just given up and cut her loose."

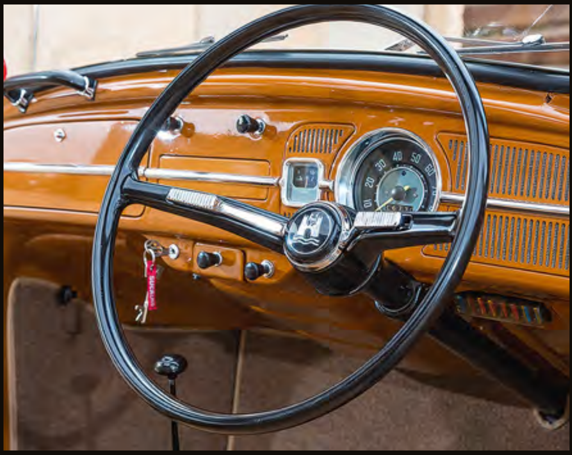
Well, as the photos show, the completed car certainly has the German Folks look. It may not have been the first to be done in the UK, but the fact Rob saw the project through is what matters. As we said at the beginning, the car has recently changed hands but, from what we are told, it couldn't have gone to a better home with its new owner, Michael Burns from Huddersfield. ■

^ The original decklid has been replaced with a genuine Karmann Convertible one

> Rob's brief was that the seats should look like stock. You'll note the seat frames have also been painted black rather than ivory

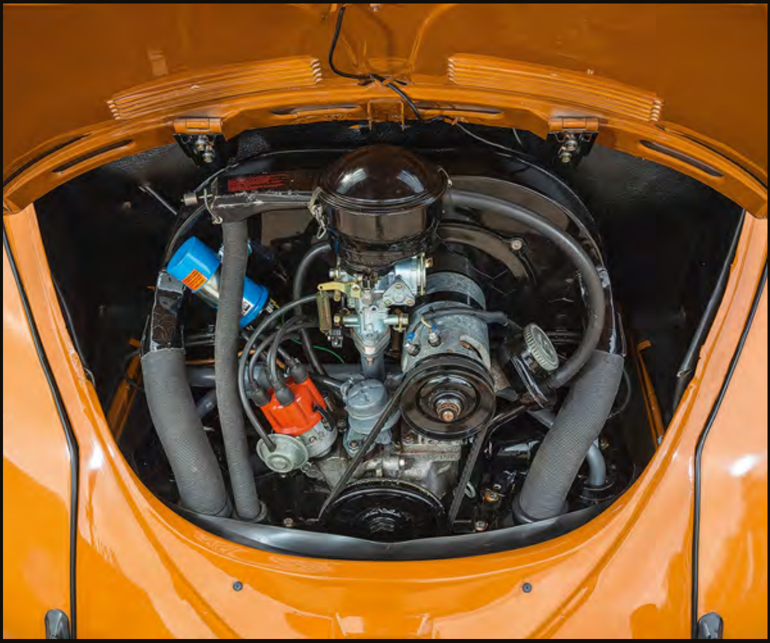
## BEHIND THE WHEEL

Of all the VWs I've owned, this was my favourite. There's just something about having that sunroof open on a sunny day. She gets tons of looks wherever she goes and it's a great feeling when a stranger comes up and tells you they love your car. For as low as she sits, she drives pretty well, as long as you navigate around any imperfections in the road higher than a matchstick! She corners great, even with the 4-inch narrowed beam and stops on a dime thanks to the front discs. The 1200 motor is not going to win any speed trials but gets you where you want to go. Like the famous saying about life, "it's the journey, not the destination." ■



All the dash parts that were originally ivory white have been painted gloss black. Looks good, doesn't it?

A D-series 1192cc engine of 1965 vintage powers the '63, and it's as nicely finished as the rest of the car



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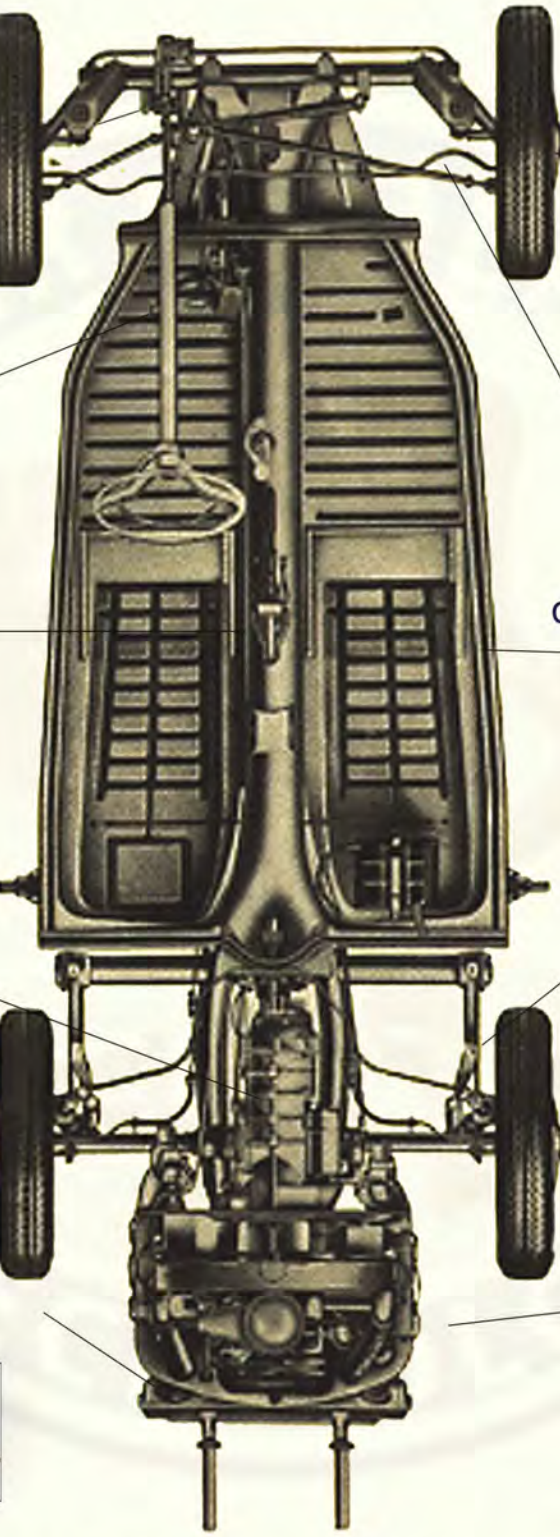

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# The numbers game

When Brendan O'Brien bought this one-owner Beetle in 1994, he didn't expect to spend the next 20 years sourcing parts for it…

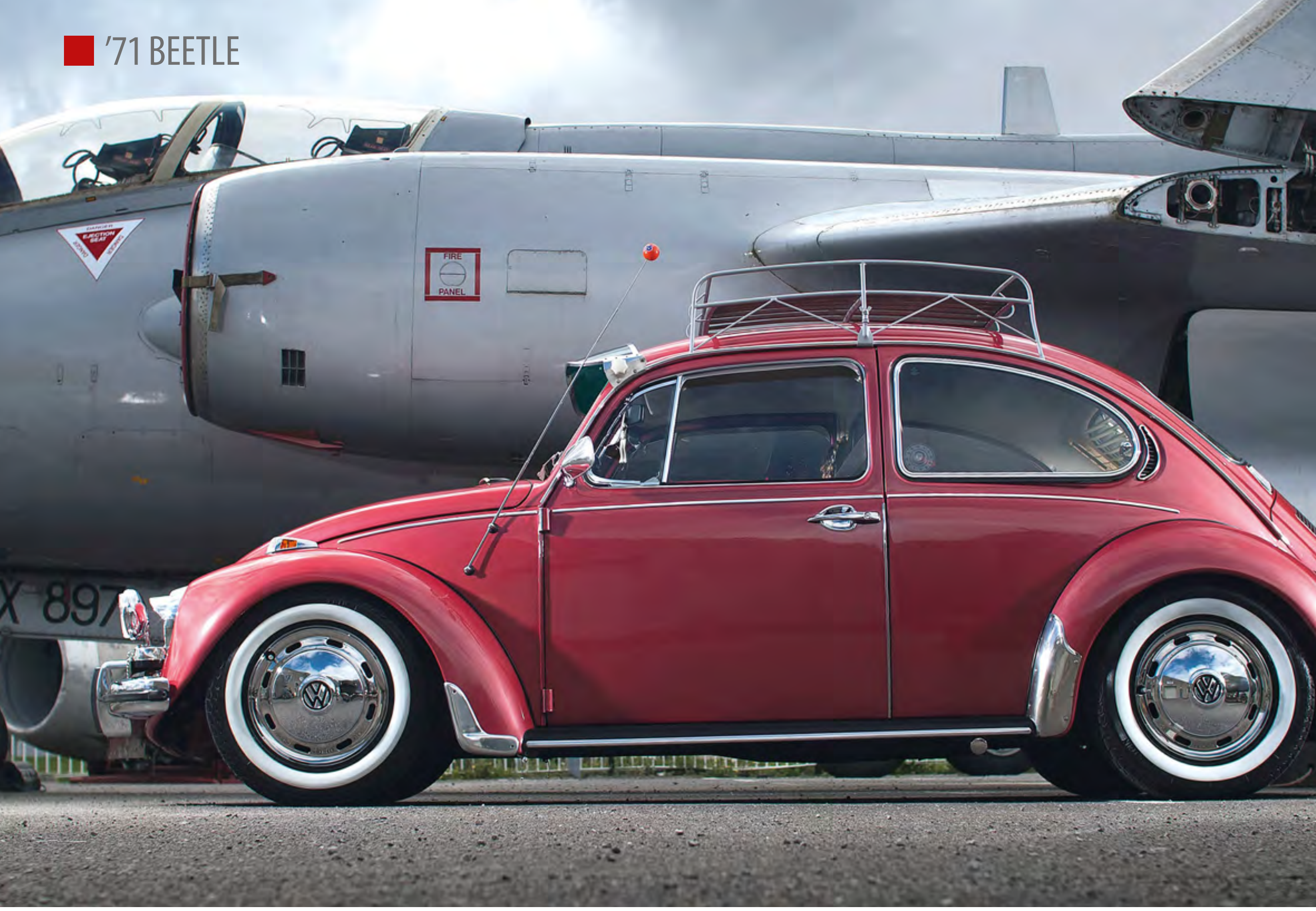
**Words** Cathal O'Toole **Photos** Andrew Pollock **Location** Atlantic AirVenture, Shannon, Co. Clare www.atlanticairventure.com

In this #fast #moving and somewhat #throw-away #society where Twitter keeps us up to date while we're OMG'ing our mates on facebook who are LOL'ing with their mates on WhatsApp, it's somewhat refreshing to find someone who can say they have owned the same VW for over 20 years and done things old school. I'm talking about someone who knew a good original Beetle when they saw it and then set about making it the best Beetle they could, even before the www made sourcing and buying parts a doddle.

The gentleman I refer to is Brendan O'Brien, a man well known in the Irish VW scene as the man who wins at almost every show his Beetle attends. If you think you'll win best accessorised, forget it, and if you think you have a shot at the people's choice award, you can kiss that one goodbye too, as this Buckaroo Beetle has Joe and Jolene Public won over

Volkswagen
NIO 848

ADAC



^ Apart from the subtle lowering and one respray, Brendan's Beetle is pretty much as it left the Dublin factory, albeit now with 100+ accessories it didn't have then

from the minute he takes off the NOS spotlight covers and sets up his display, as the 29 trophies sitting atop his ever-expanding trophy shelf attest to.

To stereotype for a moment, you might think the last thing a man with long hair, AC/DC t-shirts a-plenty and tattoos would do is spend countless hours sourcing rare accessories for a Beetle, but that's just what Brendan does. And, like any of us with an interest in VWs, there has to have been an initial reason for this hobby to take hold. For Brendan, it goes back to 1979, when he was just four years old and his grandfather had bought a brand new Beetle. On the back shelf he fitted a Perspex tunnel that a model Beetle sat in, which would slide from side to side as he drove along. Brendan was enthralled by this and, even when the Beetle was parked in the garage, would play with the toy Beetle. Another factor in Brendan's obsession was the 'count the Herbies' game he and his brothers played when going on family holidays, so I think it's safe to say his relationship with Beetles started at a very young age.

> "a one-owner, low-mileage, Beetle was never going to hang around for long"

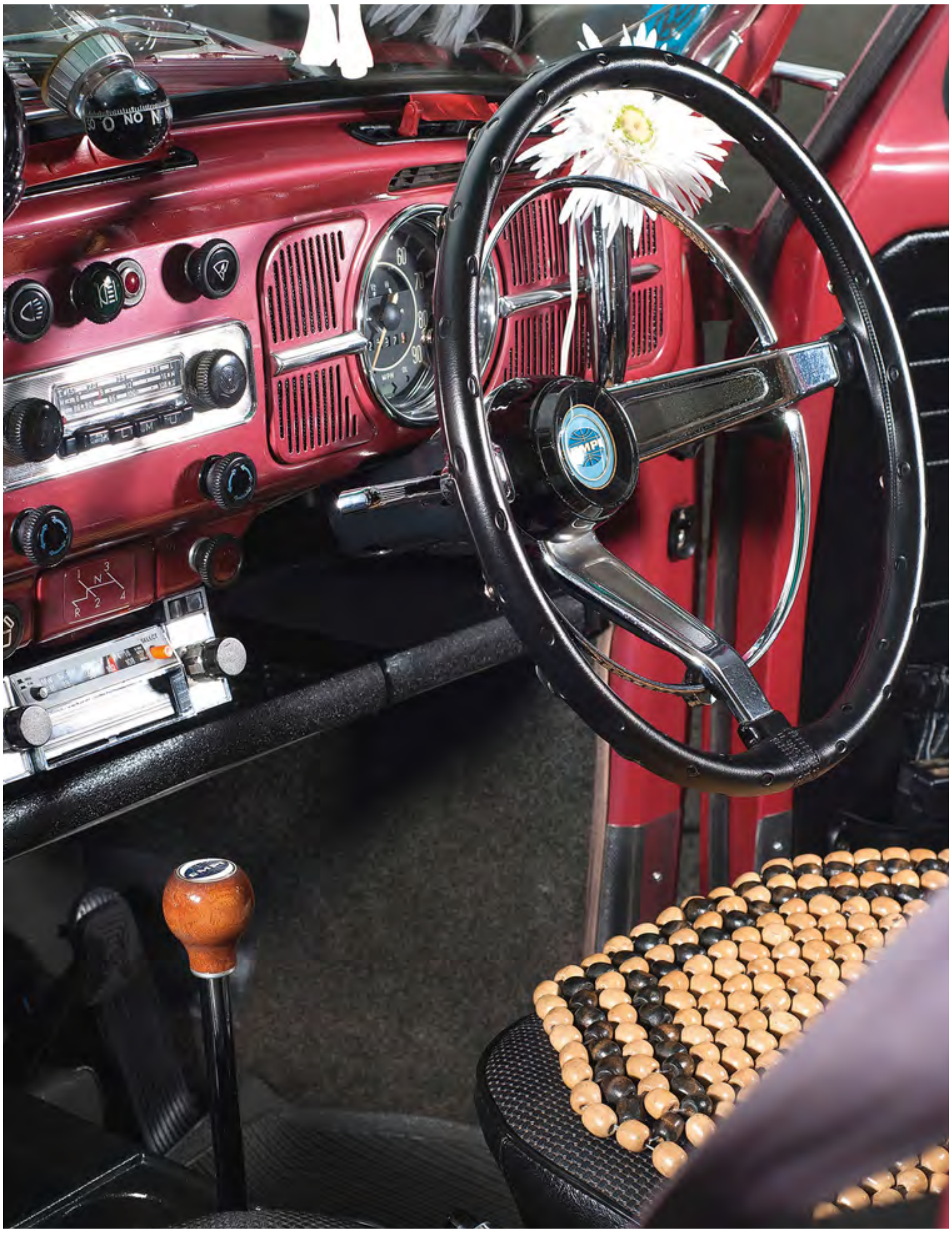
Brendan's Beetle was sold by Maxwell's VW Dealers in Athy, County Kildare on January 31 1971 to a lady named Bridget Kelly. She drove her Beetle to church on Sunday and to the shops every Thursday, which kept the mileage to a minimum. The only other person to drive the Beetle was Gerry O'Sullivan, a mechanic working at Maxwell's. Gerry would, from time to time, take the Beetle to Dublin to collect Bridget's sisters from the airport when they returned from the UK where they worked as nurses. I know, Irish nurses working in the UK, what a shocker!

When Bridget passed away, her sisters offered the Beetle to Gerry, who held it for a few months but never registered it in his name. 19 years of age by then, Brendan was working as an apprentice tool maker and was strapped for cash, although he had managed to save £1,000 towards his first car. When he heard about this Beetle, he knew he had to act fast because, even in 1994, a one-owner, low-mileage, all-original Beetle was never going to hang around for long. There was just one problem. Well, two thousand of them actually but, thanks to the bank of mum and dad who added to the kitty, Brendan secured the Beetle and, not only that, the deal included a repaint, too! It would take another year of saving before Brendan could afford to insure his first car, but when he did, the Beetle immediately became his daily driver, as well as his weekend fun toy, taking him to shows all over Ireland. And things stayed this way for seven years.

## TECH INFO

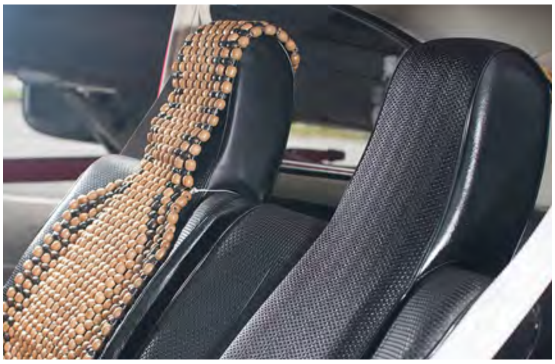
**BODY:** stock, all original metalwork
**ENGINE:** matching numbers 1200cc with only 52,000 miles
**INTERIOR:** 100% original, including carpets, rubber mats, door cards and headliner. Note rare plastic rear window demister vents
**WHEELS AND TYRES:** Stock steels with hubcaps and trim rings; 155 and 175 Vredestein Sprint Classics; whitewall flaps

Knowing the car was a keeper, Brendan took it back to Gerry for some welding on the bottom of the doors and the passenger side front quarter panel. Amazingly, the floorpans still have the original sound deadening material in place and are still in their original paint. The body and 'pan have never been split, and the seats, carpets, headliner, cardboard bonnet liner and tar board in the engine bay are all the originals from 1971. The tool bag and jack are the ones supplied with the car too, and it also came with the original



Brendan's never short of a knob to fiddle with when he's on the move

Padded, basket weave headrests are another rare genuine VW accessory. Bead seat cover belonged to Brendan's grandpa

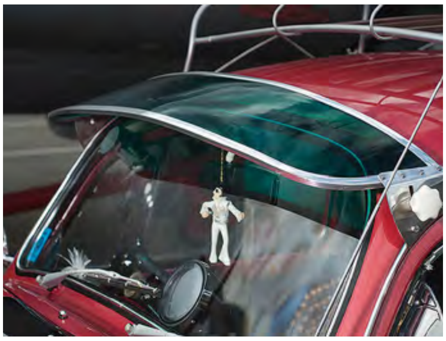


AC/DC
HIGHWAY TO HELL
TP 19244

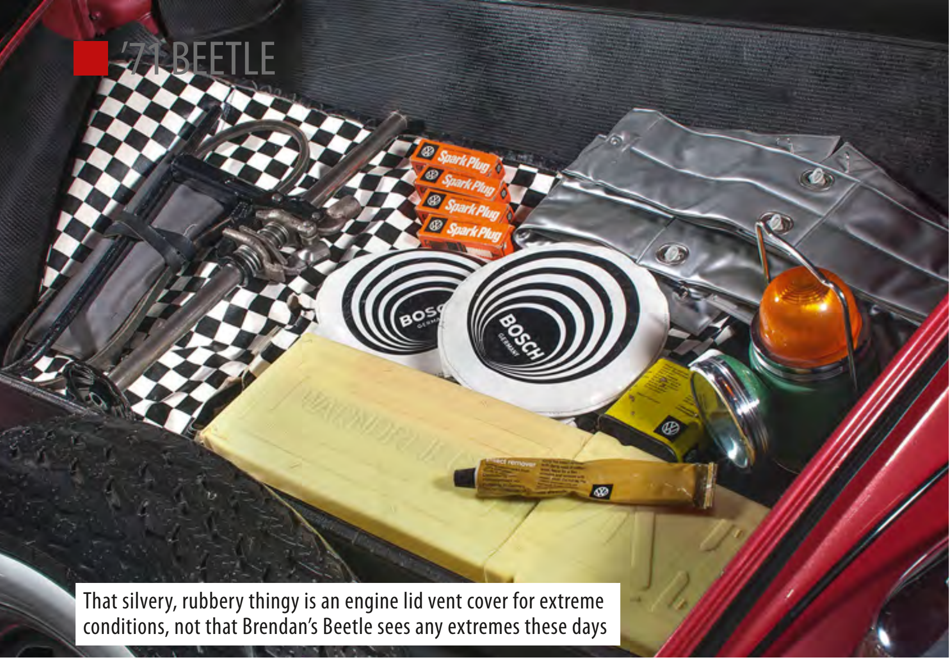
He may supply the coffee, but Brendan loses points for no donuts

As an AC/DC fan, this 8-track of *Highway to Hell* is one of Brendan's most prized accessories

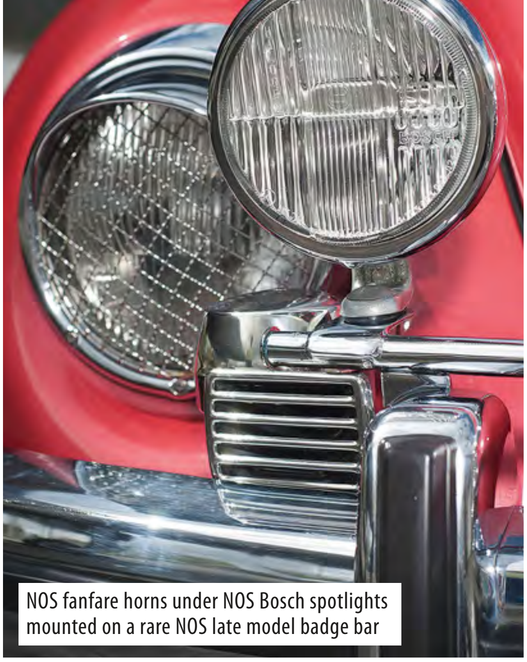
Some call these a sun visor but, living in Ireland, Brendan calls his a rain visor!



Roof rack, rain deflector, gutter trim and headrest, all in one shot. What more could you ask for?



That silvery, rubbery thingy is an engine lid vent cover for extreme conditions, not that Brendan's Beetle sees any extremes these days



NOS fanfare horns under NOS Bosch spotlights mounted on a rare NOS late model badge bar

It may not be period correct, but the Jokon reverse light has been modified to become a useful third brake light

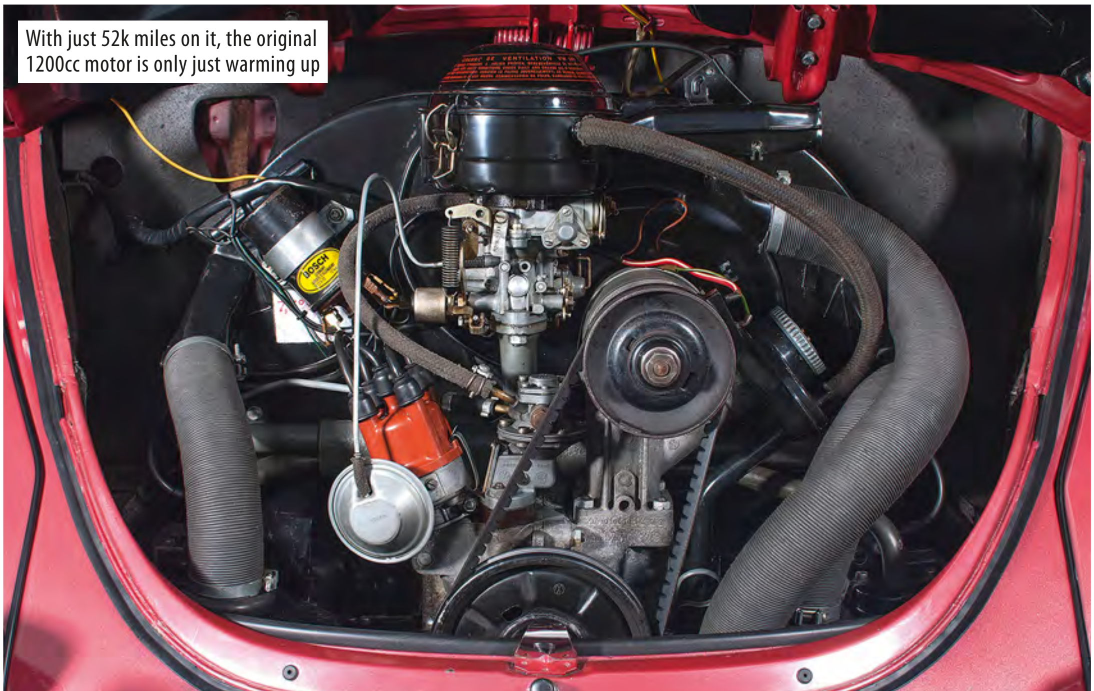
Spicing up the front wings are these Italian-spec indicators

If you can look past the Kamei door pockets, VW-stamped door, door pillar and sill trims and just look at the sill carpet and rubber floor mats, you'll see they're the originals

## BEHIND THE WHEEL

21 years ago I bought my first VW magazine, *VolksWorld*, and I still buy it every month. And I've owned my Beetle for 20 years now and will never sell it. One story that is told a lot by my wife is when we were getting married and standing at the altar and the wedding vows were being said – for richer, for poorer and so on, I added, "But you're not getting my car." The priest stopped and had a look of complete shock and surprise on his face! I love all the accessories, but the best part of owning my Beetle is just getting out in it and driving it. ■

Bridget ordered part number 000 079 008, an electric engine lid lock, for her Beetle when it was new



With just 52k miles on it, the original 1200cc motor is only just warming up

Brendan's always looking for that next rare or unusual accessory, so his current tally of 100 is sure to continue to rise. Bring on the number hunting!

owner's manual, parts price list, map of Ireland with dealership listings and breakdown service card and, to top it all off, they're still in the original envelope that they were posted from Maxwell's to Bridget's house in four decades ago.

Having used the Beetle for his and AnnMarie's wedding, bought a house and built a garage, Brendan turned his focus to accessorising his Beetle with period correct parts. These days this is pretty straightforward but, for the first 10 years of his ownership, parts hunting via the interweb wasn't an option so Brendan had to do things old school by, wait for it, actually talking to people at swapmeets, following up leads and various other forms of social interaction. Martin Murray was a great source for parts and advice, so Brendan is quick to thank him as he sourced the EMPI VDM steering wheel and pop-out windows. Another source was the late Tom Lally, who possessed vast knowledge of all things relating to 1970's accessories and, through his connections, sourced many of the accessories on this Beetle.

> "Brendan had to do things old school by, wait for it... actually talking to people"

Once he got serious about the period parts, Brendan knew he had to remove the repro EMPI alloys and any other incorrect vintage accessories. It was all about the numbers now, a lot of numbers in fact. If it didn't have a VW part number, it wasn't being fitted. NOS part 000 071 135 – bonnet scoop; 000 071 291 – bonnet grille; 000 071 317A – fuel filler neck trim; 000 072 453A – checkerboard bonnet bib; 000 072 007 – rubber bumper moulding set… I could go on (and so can Brendan), but don't think for a minute I'm going to list the other 95 part numbers because it isn't happening.

I bravely asked Brendan what his favourite accessory was, knowing full well that in a collection such as Brendan's there could never be just one favourite but, in the process of answering the question, I did find out that each and every accessory has a tale attached to it. Yes, it was a long, but very entertaining, conversation! What was also clear was that it's the hunt as much as the catch for Brendan, because he can tell you where each part came from, what he had to sell in order to raise the money to buy it and the entire back story of the part.

## Seek and you will find

Just as the internet seems to have unearthed a never-ending supply of long-forgotten Split Buses and Oval Window Beetles, it too has brought to the fore a vast array of rare and unusual 1950's and 1960's accessories, and a wealth of information about them, though Brendan reckons the internet has not yet paid out as well on the 1970's stuff. Yes, you can pick up a good VW logo radio, but Brendan's badge bar might be a little harder to find, and I bet the super rare VW logo sill trims are not seen too often at swapmeets, yet Brendan managed to track down an NOS set. If that wasn't enough, he also sourced matching door pillar and door trims, too.

For Brendan, every day is the day the circus rolls into town because, once he opens his garage door, pulls back the cover and sits in his Beetle, he is immediately transported back to 1979 and is four-years old again, only this time he's in the driver's seat. In this upload, download and instant messaging society, you just can't beat that rush of excitement when you finally find that elusive accessory you've hunted high and low to find using your connections built up over 20 years of collecting. No Wi-Fi code will do that!

One other thing to note is that Brendan's long locks of rocker hair have recently seen their last headbang but, to keep his sense of rebellion, Brendan had a tattoo of his Beetle done on his leg. As for Brendan's grandfather's 1979 Beetle, he hated it and traded it in in 1980 for a new Mazda. ■

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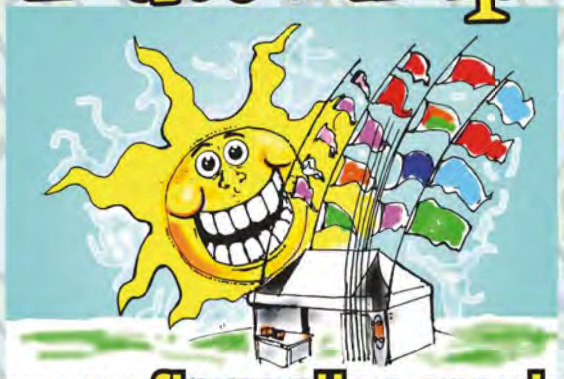

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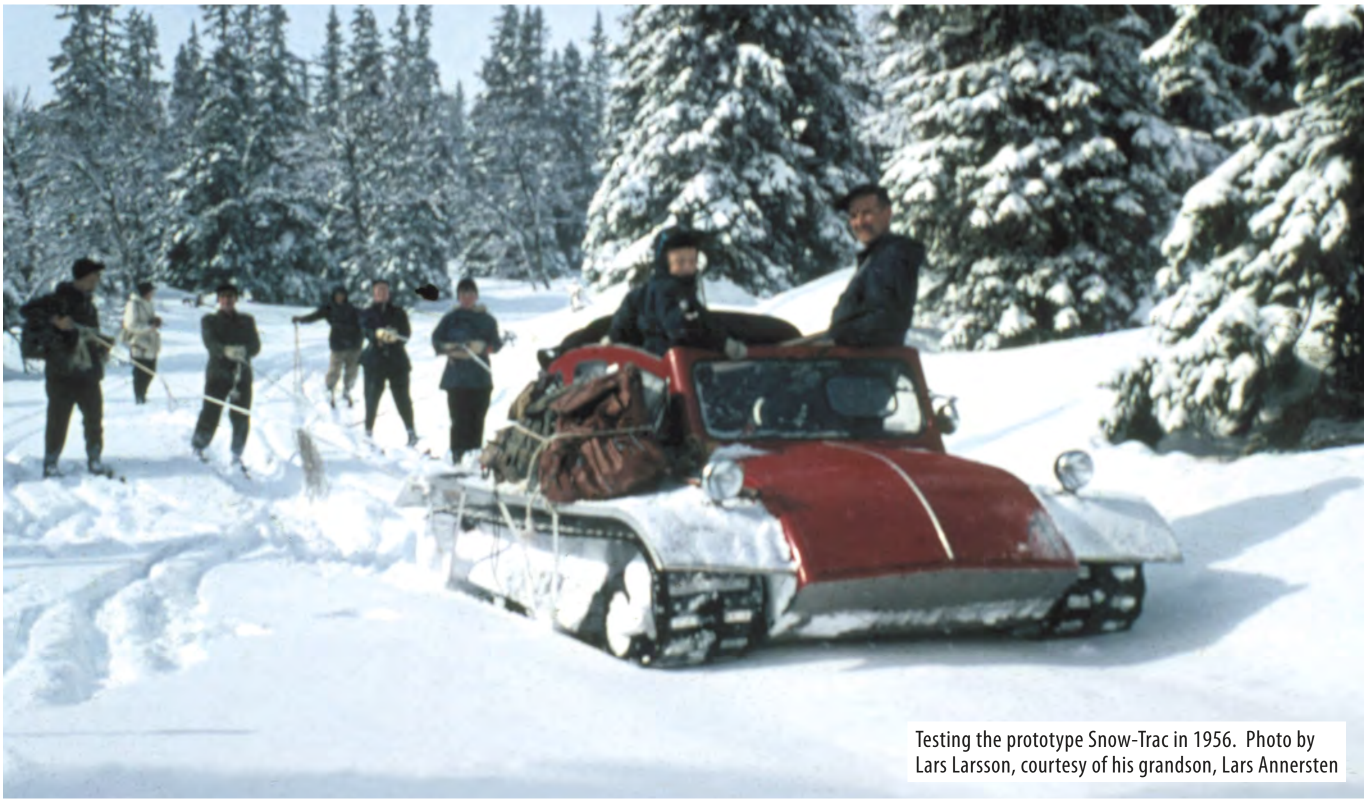


Testing the prototype Snow-Trac in 1956. Photo by Lars Larsson, courtesy of his grandson, Lars Annersten

# One Trac mind

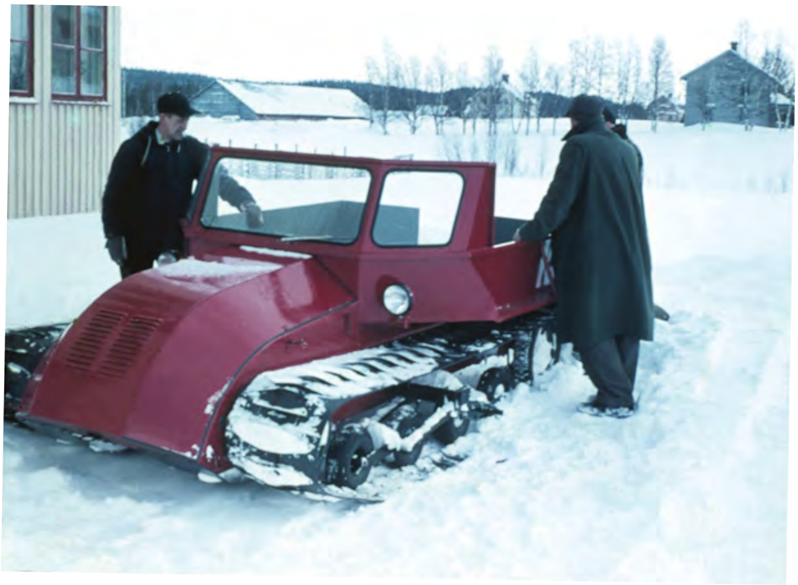
## How what started as a private runabout for its designer became a worldwide commercial success

**Words** Norman Chapman

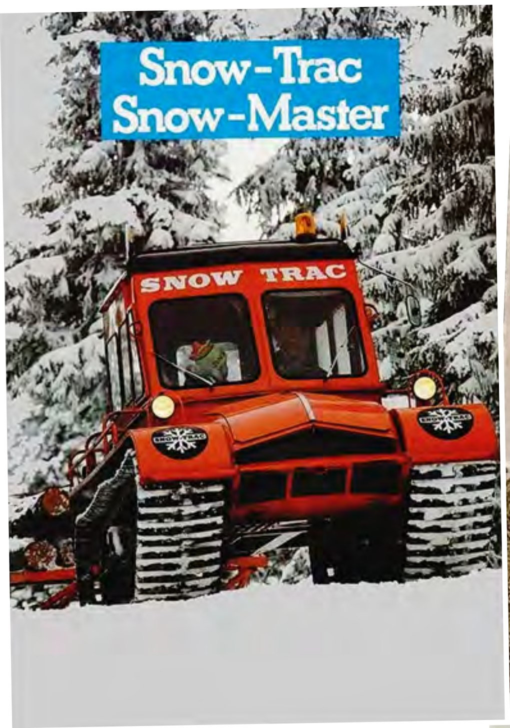
It all started in Sweden around 1954 when Lars (Lasse) Larsson decided to build a tracked recreational vehicle to take him to his cabin in the remote village of Oviken in the west of Sweden and on winter fishing trips. Lasse worked as the chief design engineer for the Swedish agricultural equipment manufacturer, Westerasmaskiner AB in Morgongava. Larsson was a talented engineer who built, amongst many other things, his own motorcycle in 1927 and his own 3D photo camera.

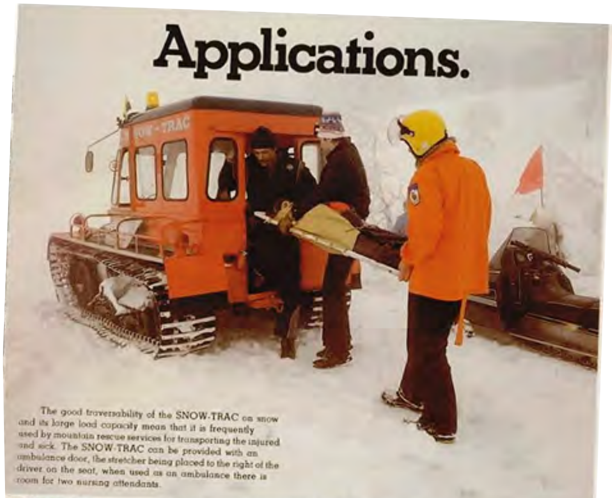
Lasse wanted a vehicle no bigger than a family car that would be reliable in extreme weather conditions. Naturally then, he chose the VW air-cooled flat four to power it, in this case an industrial version (53bhp) of the 1600cc type 126A engine. It wasn't just the engine that had a VW part number on it, the four speed synchromesh gearbox came out of a VW Bus. Unlike the Volkswagen design though, the engine and 'box were fitted into the front of the vehicle with a chain drive to the front drive sprockets. Other VW components included the steering wheel and parts of the lighting system.

Traditionally, most tracked vehicles are steered by levers, their operation slowing the drive to one track, either by a brake or clutch mechanism, as the other continues to turn at full speed. But Lasse wanted to drive the Snow-Trac like a car, so he incorporated the Westerasmaskiner 'variator' steering system, which had been developed by the company for use on combine harvesters. It used a steering box with a pulley on it and a v-belt, which directed the full tractive force to one or other track during turning, and to both equally when travelling straight ahead. Though the unusual steering system took some



> The prototype was used for two years and continually developed and refined. Photo by Lars Larsson, courtesy of Lars Annersten





Applications.

The good traversability of the SNOW-TRAC on snow and its large load capacity mean that it is frequently used by mountain rescue services for transporting the injured and sick. The SNOW-TRAC can be provided with an ambulance door, the stretcher being placed to the right of the driver on the seat, when used as an ambulance there is room for two nursing attendants.

The ST4 sales brochure showed various roles the vehicle could be used in, from mountain ambulance to logging vehicle. What it didn't show was the ST4 proved to be just as competent on sand, bringing it to the attention of the UK armed forces, too

getting used to, it made the 12ft long, 6ft2in wide vehicle very nimble, with a turning circle of just 8ft3in.

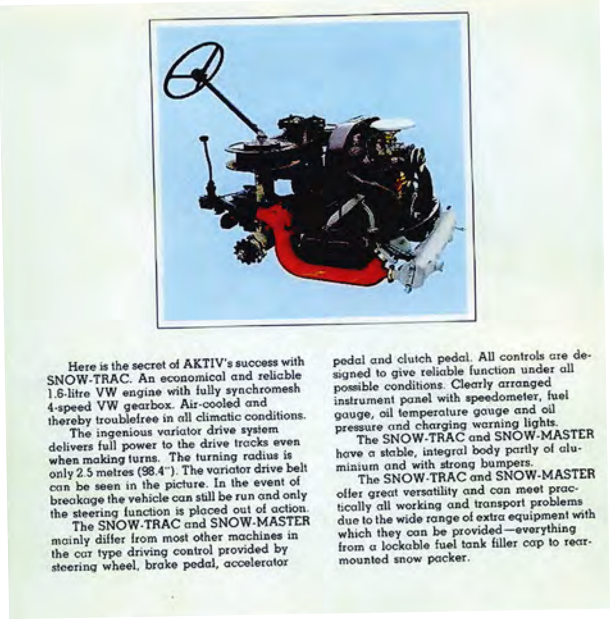
The tracks themselves were rubber with rayon fibre reinforcing, and were made up of three separate, continuous bands, held together with approximately 75 u-shaped steel 'track grippers' riveted widthways onto the outside edges. The tracks were spaced to have two open grooves along their full length, into which the double drive sprocket teeth protruded and connected with the grippers for traction. On the inside, also riveted to the track, were numerous v-shaped supports and four undercarriage wheels ran between these supports so the track ran in line. These small wheels had 4.00 x 6 pneumatic tyres fitted. The undercarriage assemblies were sprung using two inverted leaf springs on each side, dampened by shock absorbers. Above these was an assembly with a centre track support wheel fitted, while behind the drive sprocket was a large front guide wheel supported by a short stub axle. This was repeated at the rear of the vehicle with both wheels having solid tyres. The hydraulic braking system comprised drums on the inside of the drive sprockets with VW brake shoes, operated via a foot pedal, and a handbrake for parking.

The bodywork was constructed around a steel frame with a large ventilation / escape hatch in the steel roof, with entry and exit gained through the single rear door. All of the other exterior panels were constructed from aluminium.

## Commercial proposition

Lasse's concept proved sound, and what initially started as an idea for a personal recreational vehicle became a commercial proposition when, after three years of use and development, Westerasmaskiner AB bought the rights and put the Snow-Trac into production. The first official model was the ST4, which soon caught the eye of the Scandinavian armed services, as well as organisers of Arctic / Antarctic expeditions and ski resort operators. As a result, there followed the ST4B, or Trac-Master, (later nicknamed the 'Weasel') with much wider tracks and a hydraulic pump fitted to operate front and rear-mounted snow grooming rollers. When it became

Diagram showing the forward mounting position of the VW boxer engine and transmission, with the Westerasmaskiner variator steering arrangement sitting above it



Here is the secret of AKTIV's success with SNOW-TRAC. An economical and reliable 1.6-litre VW engine with fully synchromesh 4-speed VW gearbox. Air-cooled and thereby troublefree in all climatic conditions.

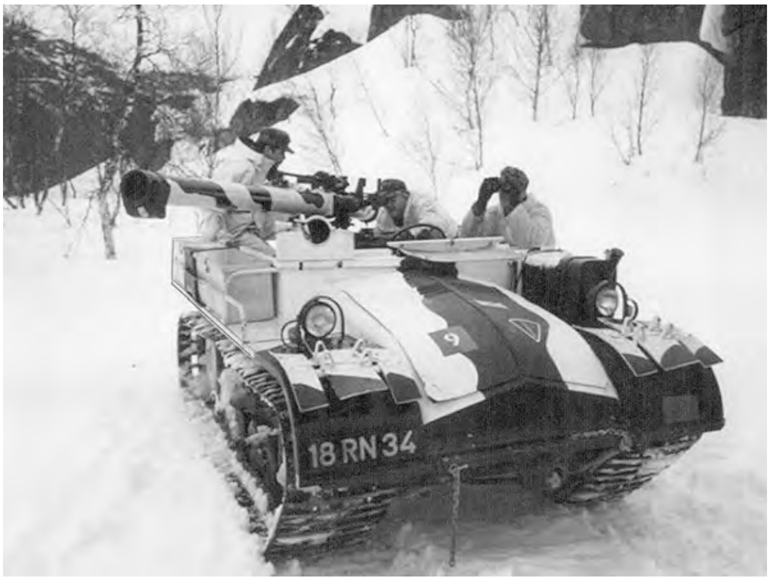
The ingenious variator drive system delivers full power to the drive tracks even when making turns. The turning radius is only 2.5 metres (98.4"). The variator drive belt can be seen in the picture. In the event of breakage the vehicle can still be run and only the steering function is placed out of action.

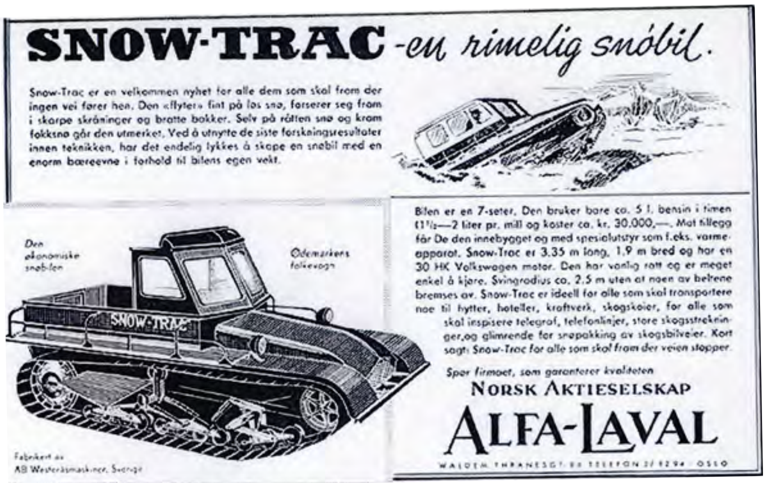
The SNOW-TRAC and SNOW-MASTER mainly differ from most other machines in the car type driving control provided by steering wheel, brake pedal, accelerator pedal and clutch pedal. All controls are designed to give reliable function under all possible conditions. Clearly arranged instrument panel with speedometer, fuel gauge, oil temperature gauge and oil pressure and charging warning lights.

The SNOW-TRAC and SNOW-MASTER have a stable, integral body partly of aluminium and with strong bumpers.

The SNOW-TRAC and SNOW-MASTER offer great versatility and can meet practically all working and transport problems due to the wide range of extra equipment with which they can be provided—everything from a lockable fuel tank filler cap to rear-mounted snow packer.

The Snow-Trac proved popular with the Scandinavian armed forces. This open-topped variant is armed with a Wombat L16 120mm anti-tank gun





**SNOW-TRAC** *-en rimelig snóbil.*

Snow-Trac er en velkommen nyhet for alle dem som skal frem der ingen vei fører hen. Den «flyter» fint på løs snø, forserer seg frem i skarpe skråninger og bratte bakker. Selv på råtten snø og kram fokksnø går den utmerket. Ved å utnytte de siste forskningsresultater innen teknikken, har det endelig lykkes å skape en snøbil med en enorm bæreevne i forhold til bilens egen vekt.

Bilen er en 7-seter. Den bruker bare ca. 5 l. bensin i timen (1½—2 liter pr. mil) og koster ca. kr. 30.000,—. Mot tillegg får De den innebygget og med spesialutstyr som f.eks. varmeapparat. Snow-Trac er 3.35 m lang, 1.9 m bred og har en 30 HK Volkswagen motor. Den har vanlig ratt og er meget enkel å kjøre. Svingradius ca. 2.5 m uten at noen av beltene bremses av. Snow-Trac er ideell for alle som skal transportere noe til hytter, hoteller, kraftverk, skogskoier, for alle som skal inspisere telegraf, telefonlinjer, store skogsstrekninger, og glimrende for snøpakking av skogsbilveier. Kort sagt: Snow-Trac for alle som skal frem der veien stopper.

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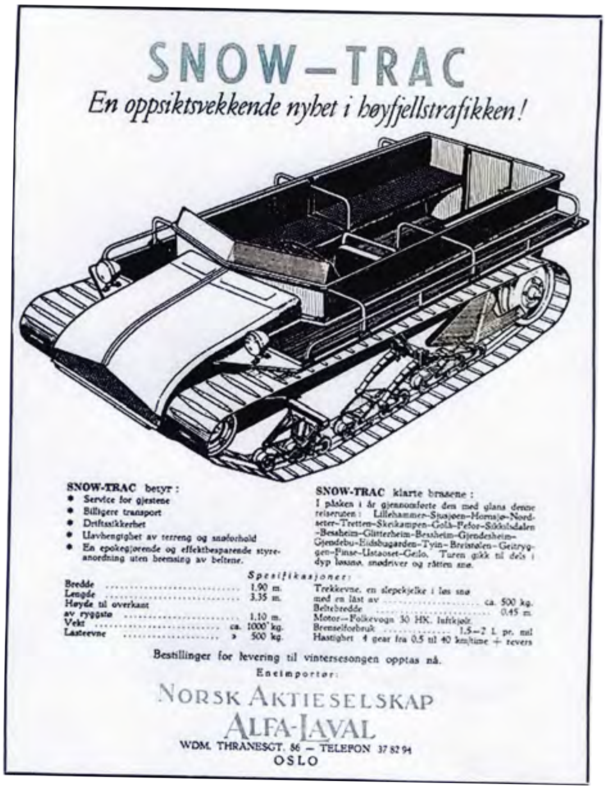
Den økonomiske snøbilen
Ødemarkens folkevogn
SNOW-TRAC
Fabrikert av AB Westeråsmaskiner, Sverige



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**SNOW-TRAC** klarte brasene:
I påsken i år gjennomførte den med glans denne reiseruten: Lillehammer–Sjusjøen–Hornsjø–Nordseter–Tretten–Skeikampen–Golå–Fefor–Sikkilsdalen–Bessheim–Glitterheim–Bessheim–Gjendesheim–Gjendebu–Eidsbugarden–Tyin–Breistølen–Geiteryggen–Finse–Ustaoset–Geilo. Turen gikk til dels i dyp løssnø, snødriver og råtten snø.

Spesifikasjoner:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bredde | 1.90 m. | Trekkevne, en slepekjelke i løs snø med en last av | ca. 500 kg. |
| Lengde | 3.35 m. | Beltebredde | 0.45 m. |
| Høyde til overkant av ryggstø | 1.10 m. | Motor—Folkevogn 30 HK. luftkjølt | |
| Vekt | ca. 1000 kg. | Brenselforbruk | 1.5—2 L. pr. mil |
| Lasteevne | » 500 kg. | Hastighet 4 gear fra 0.5 til 40 km/time + revers | |

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OSLO

^ Oslo-based Alfa-Laval modified the Snow-Trac body and many different versions were available, depending on their intended purpose. It is interesting to note that, considering the climate they excelled in, few were made with hard top roofs

clear the vehicles were as at home on sand as they were on snow, there was wider military interest, including from the British Royal Marines and REME, which led to a further range of military variants being produced with different body styles.

In 1969, another Swedish agricultural equipment manufacturer, Aktiv & Fischer, in Stockholm acquired the rights to the Snow-Trac from Westerasmaskiner and continued building and selling them worldwide until production ceased in 1981. In total, around 2,350 vehicles were built.

## British plates

It won't have escaped your notice that the two orange Snow-Tracs in the feature are on British number plates. Here's where I come in. From 1978, I worked as a vehicle fitter for the North Eastern Electricity Board (NEEB) and, in 1972, the transport department of the board purchased a Snow-Trac at a cost of around £2,000. This in itself was unusual because, up until then, the board had a policy of only buying British manufactured vehicles. That first ST4, registration number CPT 606L, was operated from the depot at Penshaw, Co. Durham.

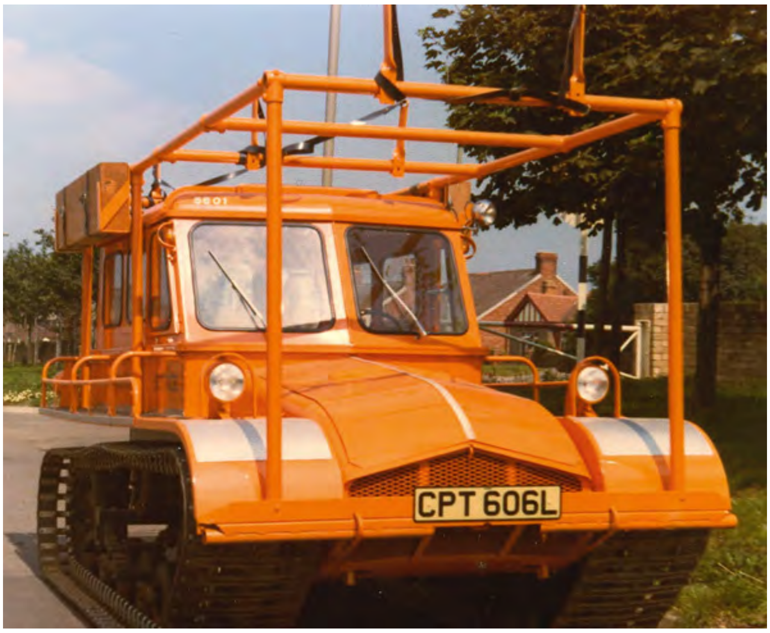
The board had a strict health and safety approach to all equipment they purchased and Transport Manager, Ray Eland, had to give assurances to the safety department that no driver of the new vehicle would be put at risk whilst carrying out his daily duties. The Snow-Trac was bought to be used in remote rural areas to maintain the overhead line network (OHL). For safety, it had to be fitted with a rollcage, which was also strong enough to carry various OHL gear and a linesman's ladder. After much deliberation, it was decided to use aluminium scaffolding poles for the structure, with the frame 'legs' bolted to each side just below the side windows and the front 'legs' fixed just in front of the track covers / wings. The joinery department made two wooden storage boxes that were mounted to the 'cage for smaller tools and service parts.

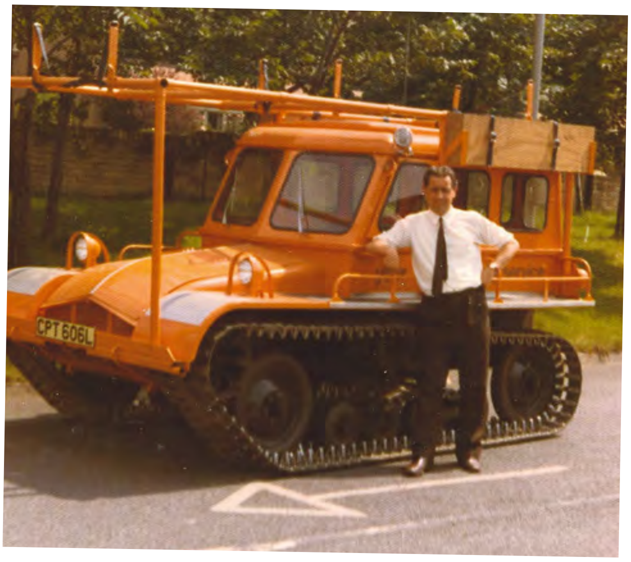
> "In total, around 2,350 vehicles were built"

Word soon got around about the vehicle and other OHL departments wanted their own. By this time, a dealership – Alexander MacLarty of Crieff, Perthshire – had been set up to assemble Snow-Tracs, which made it straightforward to buy vehicles and spares.

The last Snow-Trac was bought by the electricity board in 1987, six years after Aktiv & Fischer had

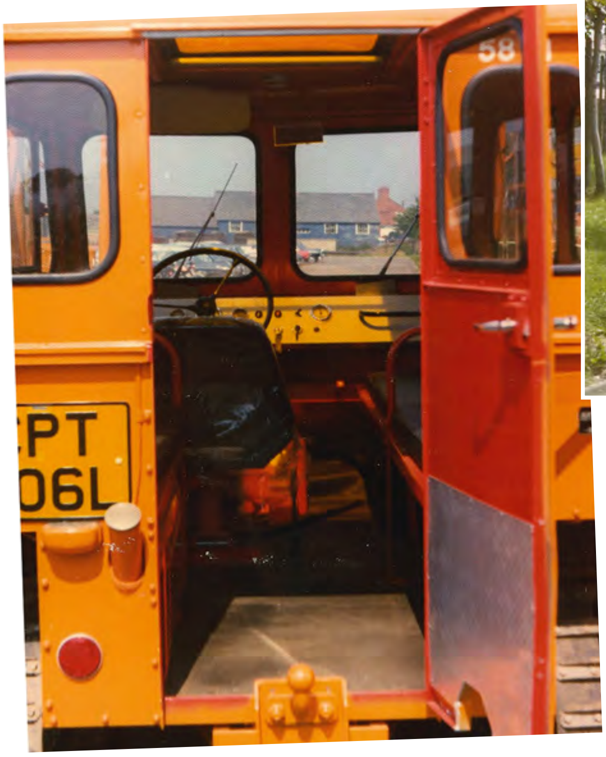
v The first British-registered Snow-Trac, ready for work with the North East Electricity Board and fitted with a rollcage and storage boxes

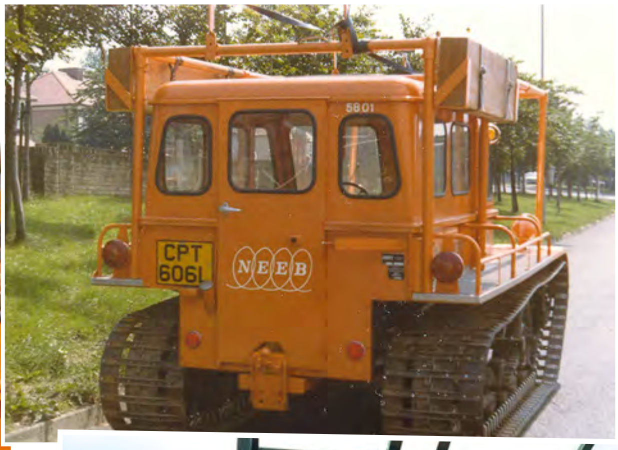




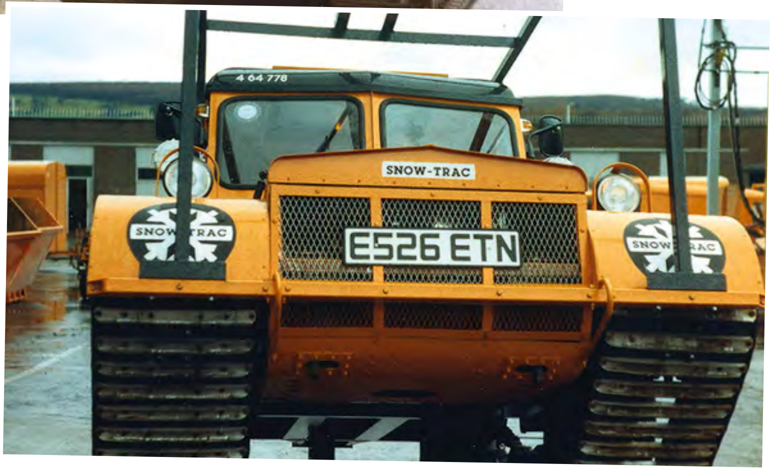
> NEEB Transport Manager, Ray Eland, poses with Snow-Trac no.1. It was Eland's job to arrange the necessary modifications for purpose, and also to ensure the safety of those who used them

Aluminium body was of similar construction to a Land-Rover. Note the crude modification made to the door to clear the tow ball





The only entry point was the rear door. The driver sat on a single seat on the left-hand side, while bench seats mounted long ways could carry up to six passengers



Although production officially ceased in 1981, there were enough parts around for dealers to continue assembly of Snow-Tracs for some time after this. This 'late model' is believed to have been built in Scotland and was bought new by the electricity board in 1987

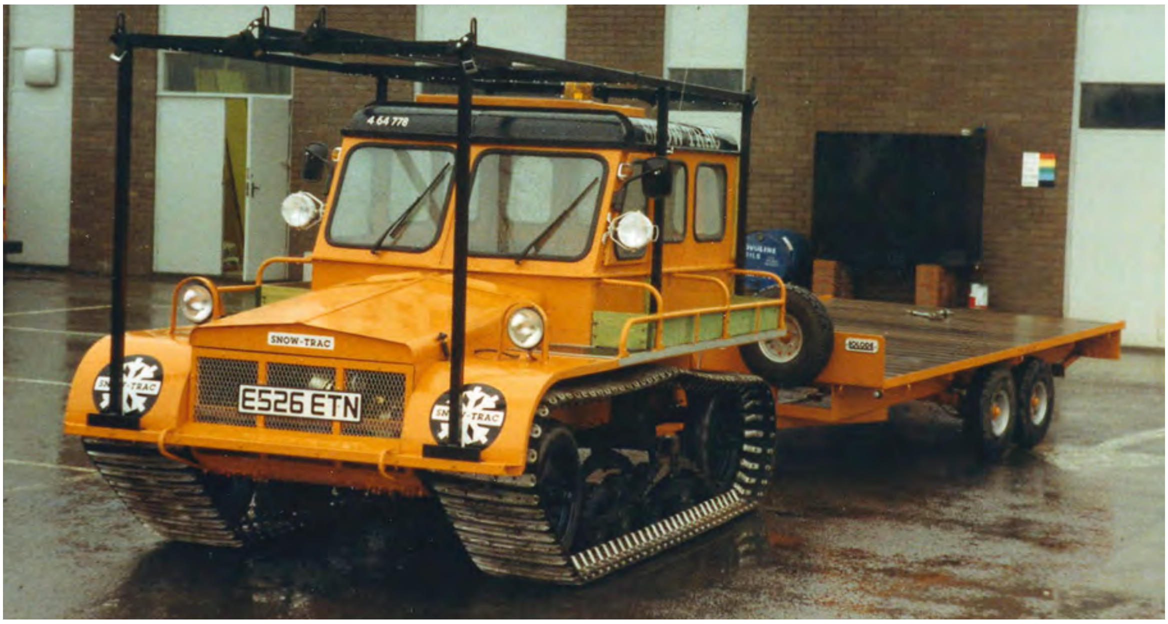
officially ceased production, again commissioned for use by the OHL department. That final one, registration number E526 ETN, was bought to replace an older ST4 that had been operated from the NEEB depot at Hexham, Northumberland.

## The same, but cheaper

I was given the job of preparing the vehicle for its working life. Ray Eland told me of the work done to CPT 606L and said he wanted the same carried out on the new vehicle, though, "On no account were aluminium scaffold poles to be used because they worked out so expensive." As I was a good welder, I was allowed to make the new 'cage out of steel instead. I used 3in square tube for the frame, with lengths of 3in angle for the front part of the ladder racks. The board used MOD-spec all-weather canvas straps with brass buckles on the boxes. When complete, a couple of coats of black Hammerite paint were applied, and then the frame was lifted onto the vehicle and bolted into place. Instead of the wooden boxes, I added some flat wood to the top of the track covers for storage. Other work carried out was the fitting of two directional searchlights, a warning beacon, a Pye Westminster two-way radio and it was finished off with fleet numbers and company logos. There was an addition bonus with this vehicle, in that it came fitted with an Eberspächer petrol heater, whereas older Snow-Tracs relied on the standard Beetle heating system.

E526 ETN gave good service with the company until it was auctioned off in 1997, though as the Hexham area didn't experience particularly high levels of snowfall, it spent much of its time parked in the depot yard on its trailer (all electricity board Snow-Tracs had their own dedicated trailers). But when the white stuff did come, the Snow-Trac was ready to go. ■

Although they wore number plates and were registered for use on UK roads, all NEEB Snow-Tracs had their own dedicated trailers so they could be towed to close by the areas they were required to work in



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Cathal's plan for this car is to return it to its former glory as an '80s UK / Irish Cal Looker

**OWNER INFO**

**NAME:** Cathal O'Toole

**OCCUPATION:** Flogger of dead horses

**CARS OWNED:** GT Beetle, '77 Cal Look Beetle, '73 Riviera Camper

**WORK THIS MONTH:** Assess the repair work that needs doing on the car. Have a stiff drink

Please don't try this at home. A pair of upended car ramps and a Workmate do not a safe working environment make. Still, at least it's chained to the roof

# Nailed it!

## First Landfill, then Gran Turdismo, now allow us to introduce the Old Nail

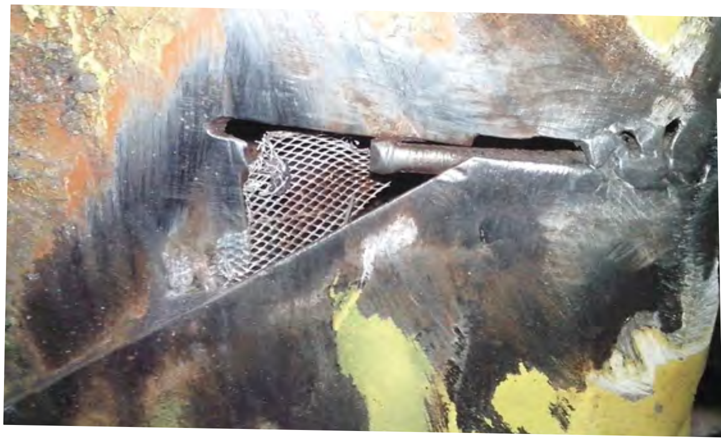
It was all going so well, wasn't it? When I first stripped this car down, I believed it was a solid Beetle, and technically it was, just not for the right reasons. Myself and Graham delivered (read: dumped) the Beetle to my mate Trevor Brady's house and we headed for home. Then, for the next few evenings, when Trev would get a few minutes in the garage, I would get a message on my 'phone saying he had found some rot, or a bad repair. At first, I presumed it was all a joke but, sadly, it wasn't, so I took a trip to see for myself what all the fuss was about. Yikes! The boy wasn't lying!

For those that don't know my mate Trev, the easiest way to describe him is to say he's the Irish version of our own Steve Gosling. These OCD twins must be related somewhere along the way because when I say, "sure, it'll be grand" Trev shudders and asks me to leave the garage as he figures out a way to re-engineer a repair in such a way as not to be visible. Suffice to say, Trev believes in doing things right.

> "this takes bodges to a new low"

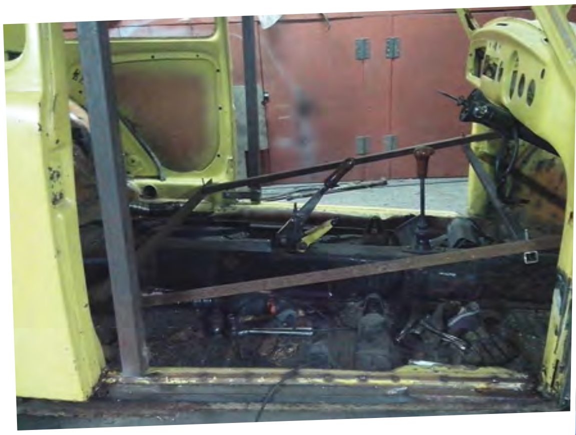
First things first then. The body needed to come off the chassis, but the first problem was it was welded to the floorpan via three or four L-shaped brackets that one of the previous owners though would be a better option than repairing the rusted heater channel. Once they were removed, what was left of the channel literally fell away, so the decision was made to brace the body, just in case any other shoddy repairs were found and my dream car split in two. Despite his laughing, I do think Trev would have felt a little bad if that had happened! So Trev braced the body, cut the rest of the brackets off that held the body to the 'pan and lifted the body off for the first time since 1987.

Thankfully, the floorpan looked to be reasonably solid but, until I get to removing the underseal from the 'pan, it



Giving a whole new meaning to the phrase rusty old nail. This is what was found under the filler in the a-post

Cathal's motto with cars he buys: if I can't see though it, I'm not interested



Brace yourselves, this ain't gonna be pretty…

Just some of the repair panels needed for project Old Nail. Camera technology doesn't yet exist to fit all of those required into one photo

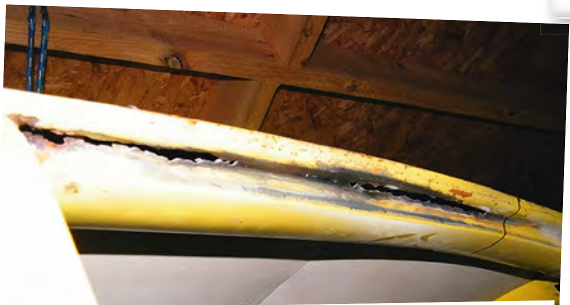
may be a case of the bottom being like the top, with patch upon patch upon patch. Let's hope not.

One of the first areas Trev focussed on was the roof, specifically the gutter area that had rusted through. And not in the usual areas either, that would be too simple. The gutter had rusted through at the base of where it joins the roof itself. When the sealer that hid this was removed, we could actually see through to the inner roof above the door! Needless to say, this is an extremely awkward area to repair, so Trev put the word out that a roof section was needed, and thanks have to go to our mate, Dave Cole, who had a spare roof section that was prime for cutting up. To top it off, he delivered it to Trev's place. Well, he is a postman after all!

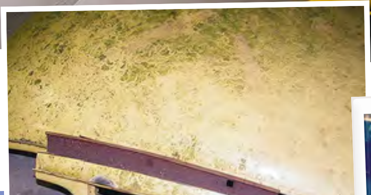
I ordered a pair of Hooky's door pillar repair panels, and the quality is unlike anything else out there, so I definitely recommend these to anyone. But it was in the prep for fitting Hooky's door pillar sections that the next oddball repair came to light. We've all seen mesh and glass fibre matting in place of solid welds, but I have never seen wire and nails used to fill a gap. That's right, feckin' nails! I thought I'd seen it all in Landfill, but this takes bodges to a new low. How? Why? WTF? Are you having a laugh? I didn't throw the door pillar sections away with the nails in because I want to show them to Eoin, the car's original owner, as he will not believe what kind of arsing about went on with his once pride and joy.

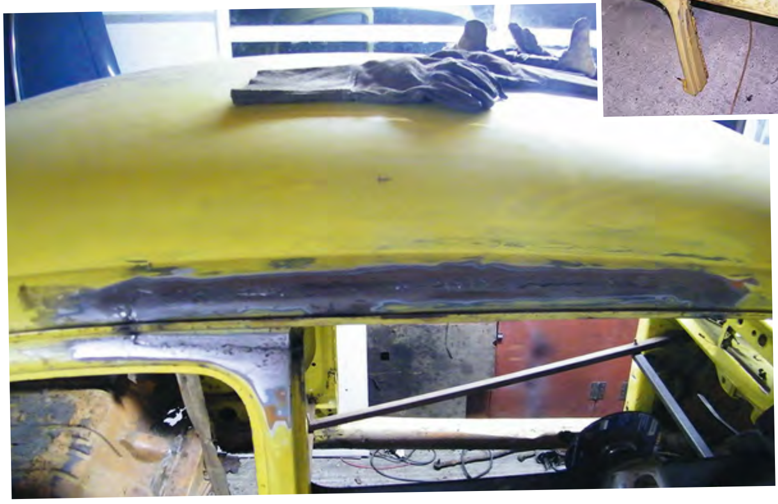
On the upside, I'm pleased to say the repair work to the roof is now finished. The weld Trev made along the gutter is so neat and tidy it will only need a tiny amount of filler in preparation for the respray. Trev's attention to detail is something to behold and I have to take my hat off to him. He'll hate me saying that as he hates compliments but, to be fair, it's the only compliment he'll be getting from me because his garden is shite, his daily driver is a crime against motoring and his sense of style makes Borat cringe! Now get back to work and let's get this car finished. ■

Don't ask us how, but the gutter rot appeared to have started underneath and worked its way into the roof



The only answer was to source a new roof section and cut out the pieces needed





Then stitch them into the car's roof to make it solid again

## VOLKS WORLD PROJECT CARS

Back in black

**Owner:** James Peene
**Car:** '66 Beetle, '70 Bay Window
**This month:** With the beam and brakes on, I turned my attention to the rest of the steering components. A wire brush, lick of black paint and they're good to go

**Owner:** Steve Gosling
**Cars:** '61 ragtop
**This month:** I may not be using the *de rigueur* Resto Cal tyre, but running Michelins means I can have matching inner tubes. I like that pointless detail!

A box of Bibendum

For the Hella it

**Owner:** Ivan McCutcheon
**Cars:** '67 Beetle
**This month:** At long last I have located a pair of US market, '67-only, Hella SB12 headlight bezels

**Owner:** Jon Pratt
**Cars:** '70 Bay
**This month:** My first job for the New Year is to remove the leaky glass sunroof and weld up the hole. I put a bucket under it a week ago to catch the drips and it's already half full!

Hell hole

The clampetts

**Owner:** Mark Walker
**Car:** '68 Beetle
**This month:** I finally started on the '68. First job is to replace the carpet clamp strips on the channels, then I'm planning to detail the inside in Zenith Blue

**Owner:** Gordie Woollacott
**Car:** '78 Westy
**This month:** New home, new garage. And the Bay Window fits! Damn, there goes my first excuse for lowering it…

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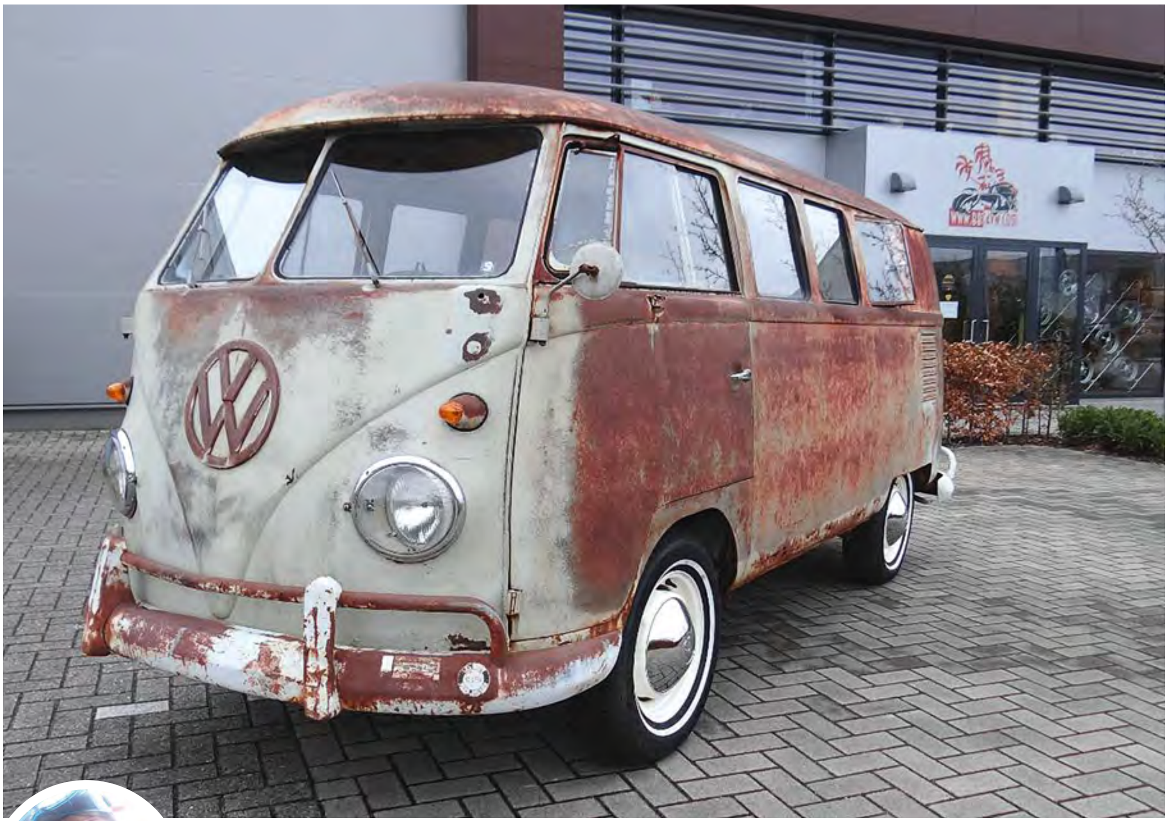
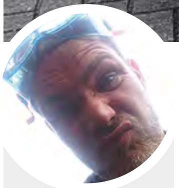


One of the photos from the BBT blog that sold the Bus to me. Love that sunburn, though the reality is this was no 'dry-state' Bus



## OWNER INFO

**NAME:** Steve Parsons
**OCCUPATION:** Graphic designer and illustrator
**CAR:** 1961 Split
**WORK THIS MONTH:** Cut out rot and replace with good steel

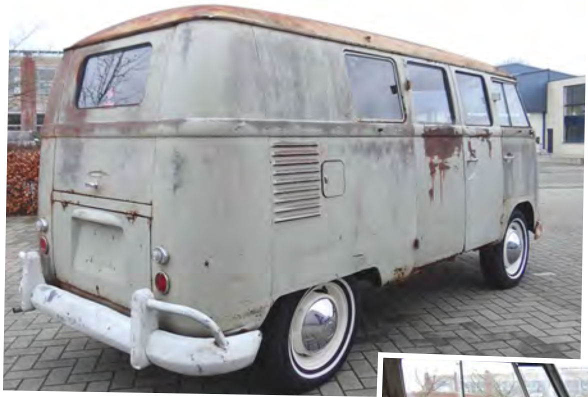
# Here we go again

## Sell a completed car to start again with something much worse? Oh go on then

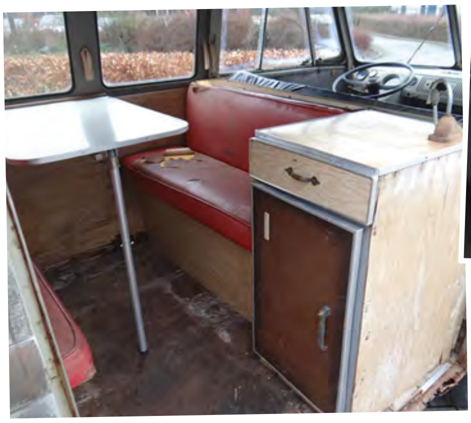
In March this year, I decided to sell my '63 Karmann Ghia after only having it on the road for a year following the restoration. My reasons were quite simple, I wanted a new project, and I wanted a Bus. Fed up with the ballache of pitching a tent whilst your mates with Type 2s sit around chatting and drinking beer in their home for the weekend seconds after the engine was switched off, I wanted a piece of that action.

The Bus I purchased is an unmolested, original paint, late 1960-built Kombi, with an original Riviera interior. I saw it for sale on the BBT blog a month or so before I sold the Ghia, and instantly knew it was exactly what I was after, so I wasted no time and got on the 'phone to Belgium to speak with BBT's top man, Bob Van Heyst. Bob couldn't have been more helpful and accommodating, and we agreed a deal, securing the US-import Bus with a borrowed deposit (thanks Jim). Once again, I had bought a VW from a few photos I had seen on the internet…

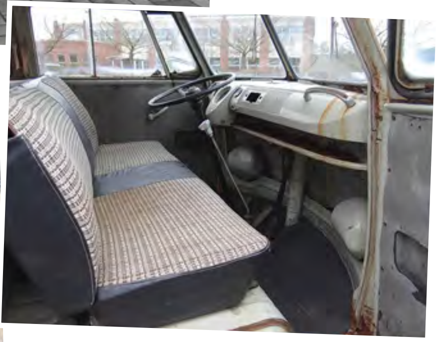
With the Ghia sold and the rest of the required cash scraped together, the new purchase was paid for and delivered by BBT to my door less than a week later.



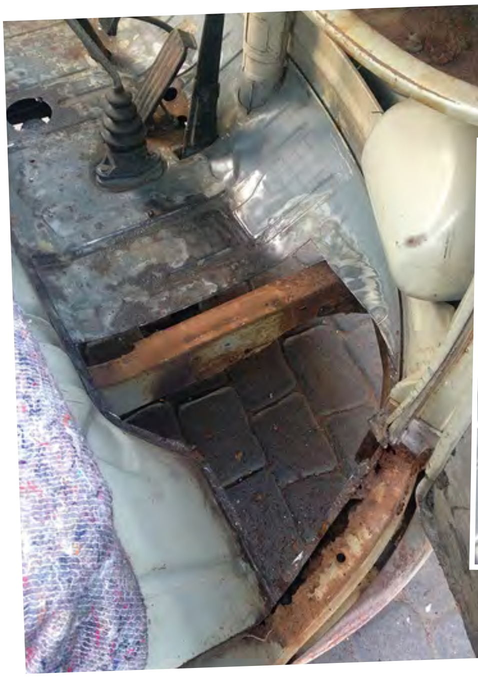
A Bus of two halves. This side hasn't got the same kind of patina as the other, but still has some nice fades in the original paint



Complete, original Riviera interior will be freshened up and sympathetically repaired where needed

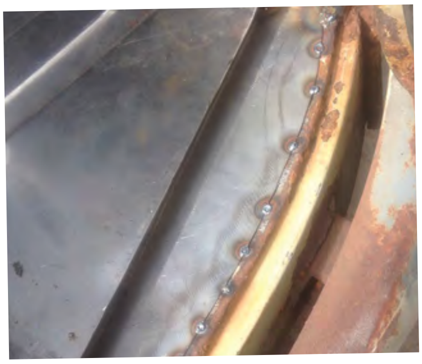


The cab is in pretty good shape, though a previous owner must have had a gauge fetish



Passenger side cab floor was totally shot, so all the rot was cut out…

…and fresh Auto Craft Engineering steel let in



I fettled a home brewed repair panel for this closing section. I just need to drill a drain hole as per the original

Cardboard templates were made before I cut this out of flat steel. It does the job and saved me some cash!

I wasted no time in getting in and under it to see what I had just spent every last penny I had to my name on. I knew it needed repair panels to the lower sections of bodywork as this was in the description and was clearly visible in the photos I had seen. What wasn't known was the extent the dreaded rust had taken hold. Poking, prodding and banging revealed further areas that I hadn't expected to be past their best but, in hindsight (and chatting to other folk who have worked on US Buses), it was inevitable they would be shot, too.

The main areas that needed cutting out and replacing were all the outriggers, the top hat sections, jacking points, inner and outer sills, sill strengtheners, left and right cargo floor sections, b-posts, c-posts, side strengtheners and cab floor sections. Yes, that's right, most of the lower part of the Bus!

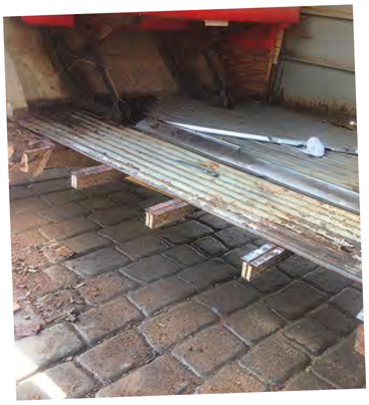
Admittedly, some of these areas could have been patched up and made good, but I want this to be done right and to look as factory as possible underneath, so the best way was fresh steel. I was advised that Auto Craft Engineering (www.autocrafteng.co.uk) were the guys to use for the panels and the class of product I got for my money was exceptional. As the old saying goes, you get what you pay for.

Now, one thing I have failed to mention so far is my lack of welding skills. I have put a few old VWs back on the road over the years, but have always had to rely on the kindness and generosity of others (mainly members of the RSVP brethren), to help me past this stumbling block. This time though, money was non-existent to pay someone to do the extensive work, so I was determined to do it for myself and learn the skills needed to make this rusty Bus roadworthy once again. So, a quick 10-minute welding lesson from Colin Pace and the loan of his welder saw me back in my garage trying to lay 'stacks of dimes' on scraps of steel. Surprisingly, the results were half-decent looking, and also strong, which is what matters.

> “I want this to be done right, and to look as factory as possible”

I won't go into detail about every repair panel and the trials and tribulations faced, but I will say this: take your time, measure at least twice, cut once and cut accurately. I spent many hours scratching my bonce as to the right order to cut out and weld back in panels and, if it hadn't been for the expert advice of my good friend, Phil Sutton from Creative Coachworks (www.creativecoachworks.co.uk), who was inundated with messages and 'phone calls asking how I should tackle certain areas, I'm pretty sure I wouldn't be as far on as I am with the work. Cheers Phil.

I haven't had masses of time to work on the Bus, but progress is clearly visible and, at the time of writing, the offside is 99% finished. My next job is the dreaded long side outer sill. I'll let you know how I get on in due course. ■



The cargo floor was cut back to good, solid metal. Fortunately the I-beam sections below were in good order

Fresh outrigger and top hat section in situ. I'm actually really pleased with the finished work

The rear jacking point was grafted in place prematurely, so had to be cut off as it hindered fitment of the sill. All part of the learning curve

A milestone! Door side floor is now solid again. The two holes are drain holes for the tap, I think…

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# Braking good

## When was the last time you checked your drum brakes? Exactly, so now's the time. Here's how to do it right

**Words and photos** Matt Keene

All air-cooled VWs come from the factory equipped with rear drum brakes with manual adjusters. This set up works well, but does require periodic inspection, adjustment and maintenance. Generally speaking, it is wise to check and adjust the brake shoes every 1,000 - 1,500 miles, or annually if you don't drive your car often.

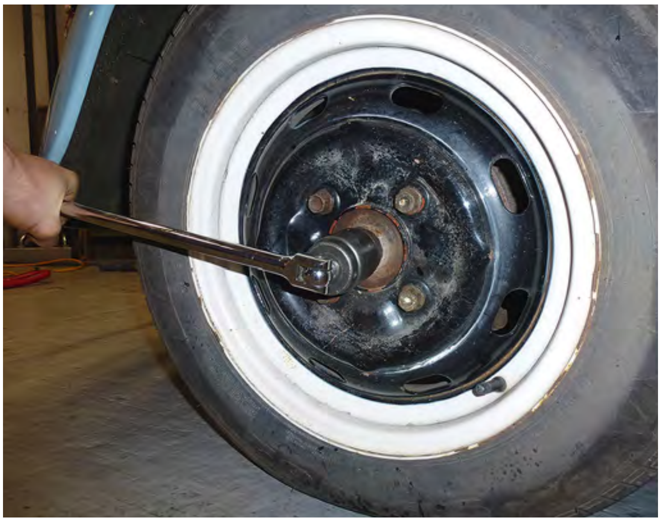
As a rule of thumb, a comprehensive inspection should be carried out every 12 months. The reason for this over-cautious approach is that, unlike disc brakes, the drum brake set up is not self-adjusting and is far less visible. All of the working components are housed within a brake drum and backing plate, making a purely visual inspection very tricky.

The access points on a Volkswagen rear drum brake are small inspection holes on the brake backing plate on late vehicles and through holes in the front of the drum on early vehicles. Typically, a detailed inspection of a rear brake set up requires the removal of the brake drum. Sorry, but there really is no getting around this.

A detailed inspection will give you a good idea of the condition of your brake set up. It will allow you to assess general wear and tear of the brake shoes and the drum braking surface, and it will offer you the chance to spot dangers such as leaky wheel cylinders and perished brake pipes, all of which could lead to brake failure, which is precisely what you are aiming to avoid.

This how to intends to show you the components of a rear drum brake, what you are inspecting for and how to adjust them, and will be of use to any standard air-cooled VW, as the procedure is pretty much the same regardless of model. However, depending on the year / model of your vehicle, there may well be some small differences to the late model, four-stud Beetle shown here.

A final point worthy of note: when renewing brake shoes, always replace both sides on the vehicle, even if the shoes were relatively new and one side had to be replaced due to contamination. Replacing just one side will cause an imbalance and lead to uneven brake shoe wear. ■



**01** On standard VWs it will be necessary to remove the hubcap, followed by the hub nut split pin. Then, whilst the vehicle is still on the floor, loosen the large hub nut. On Beetles it will be 36mm and on Buses from 1965 onwards, it will be 46mm. Beware, the hub nut is torqued to 220ft.lbs, so will require a strong breaker bar and socket to undo

## JOB INFO

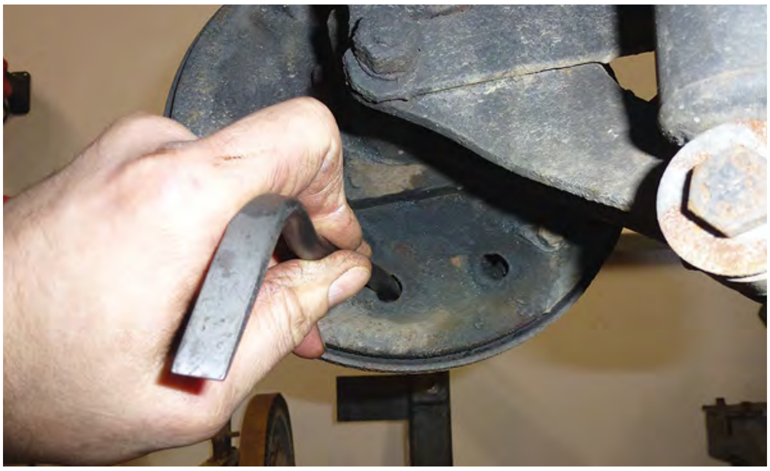
**TOOLS NEEDED:**
Trolley jack and at least two axle stands 19mm socket and breaker bar
36mm or 46mm socket
Lever bar
Soft-faced mallet
Wire brush
Brake adjuster tool (a large flat-blade screwdriver will do)
A pair of self-locking pliers

**MATERIALS USED:**
Brake cleaner, copper grease and some clean rags

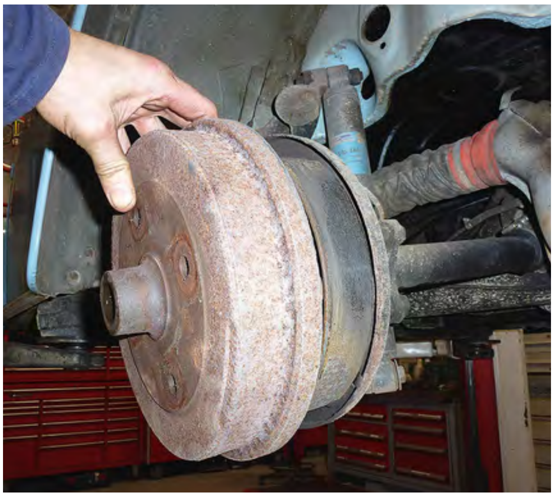
**TIME TAKEN:**
1-2 hours per side

**COST DIY:** £0

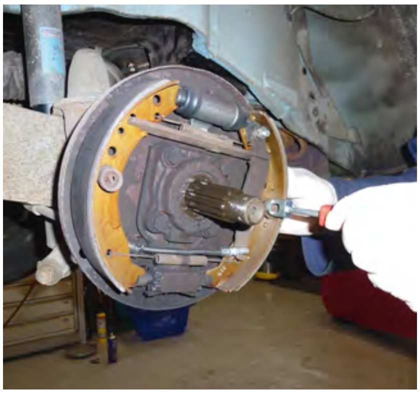
**PRO:** £60-80 labour, more if any parts are required



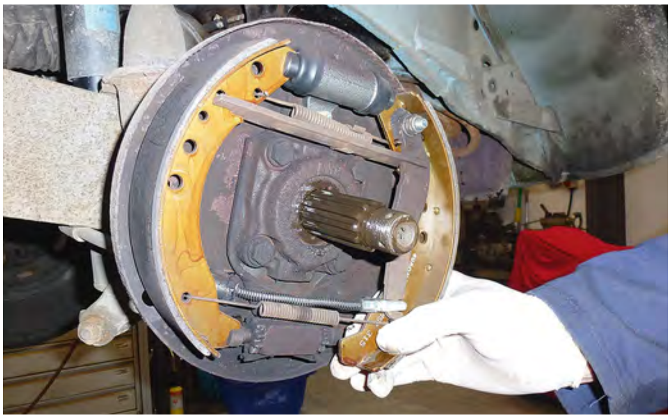
**02** With the vehicle jacked up and secured on axle stands, the next step is to remove the road wheel. This will give you better access to the brake shoe adjusters. Make sure your vehicle is secure by using wheel chocks to prevent it from moving as you will need to release the handbrake. It will be necessary to back the brake shoes off a good few turns, so locate and turn both adjusters anti-clockwise a few turns



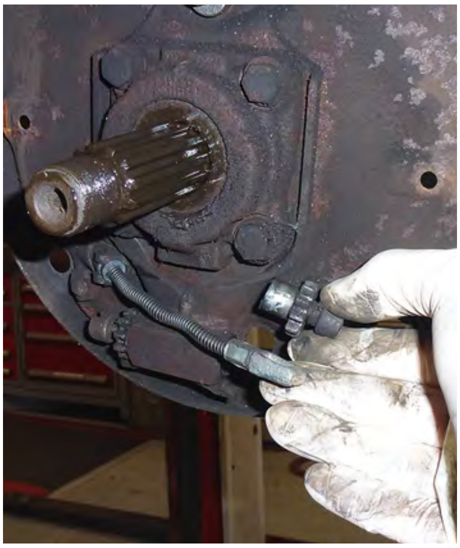
**03** With the brake shoes backed off, the brake drum should slide off with minimal fuss. If you encounter resistance, check you have released the handbrake and have backed off the adjusters sufficiently. Sometimes a gentle tap with a rubber or plastic mallet may be required



**04** Securing the brake shoes to the backing plate is a simple spring mechanism. You need to compress the spring and remove the securing cup. There is a special tool for this job (shown here), but it can be done with pliers or similar

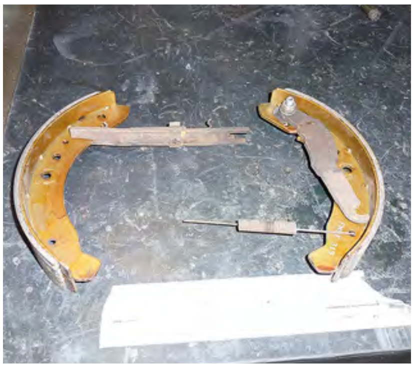


**05** Once the springs and clips have been removed, you can then remove the brake shoes from the back plates. I find pulling the brake shoe at the weaker spring end is the easiest way to disengage the brake shoes from the adjuster mechanism



**06** Once you have removed the brake shoes, turn your attention to the 'star' adjusters. These are the main part of the brake adjusting mechanism, and need to be inspected, cleaned and lubricated

**07** With every brake inspection, it is paramount that the wheel cylinders are checked thoroughly for any signs of leaking brake fluid. Replace any wheel cylinder that is leaking, otherwise this will contaminate the brake shoes and lead to potential brake failure



**08** Transfer the brake shoe assembly to a suitable flat surface for inspection. Take note of (perhaps a quick picture for later reference?) the orientation of the springs and the handbrake mechanism, as it's quite easy to get something muddled up on re-assembly

**09** Inspect the brake shoes for wear and ensure they are within serviceable limits. Check for any contamination from brake fluid and replace them if so. If all looks good, give them a quick roughen up with 80-grit sandpaper to take off any 'glaze' and help with braking efficiency

Comma
Copper Ease

**10** All of the moving parts that interact should be cleaned and given just a little heat resistant lubrication such as Copper Ease, or similar. Ensure none can come into contact with the braking surfaces, for obvious reasons

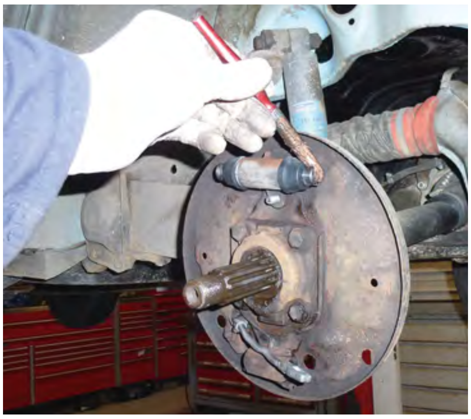
**11** Disassemble the star adjusters, clean them thoroughly with a wire brush and give them a light coating of copper grease to ensure free movement and ease of adjustment in the future

# Maintain rear drum brakes

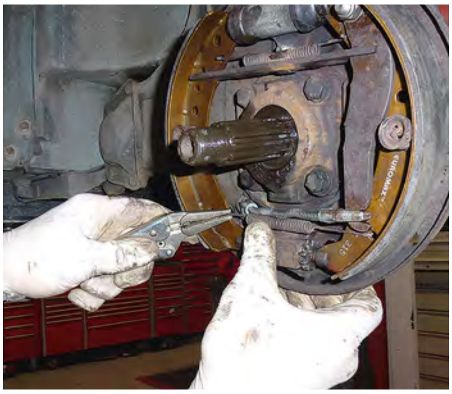
**12** Inspect the brake drum for any cracks or obvious defects, paying particular attention to the braking surface. Once you are happy that all is in order, roughen up the braking surface with some 80-grit sandpaper

**13** With the drum good to go, give it a final clean to remove any residue. Brake cleaner is, of course, the best solvent for this task

**14** Now turn your attention to the brake backing plate. Give it a good clean with brake cleaner and a wire brush, then inspect it thoroughly for any damage. Though it is not common, we have seen backing plates rust through or crack, so bear this in mind

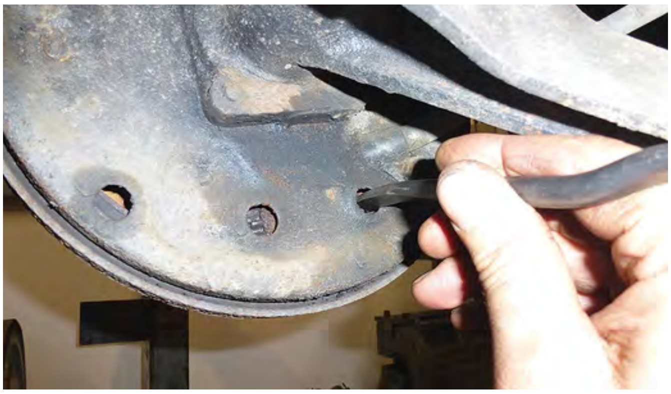


**15** Give the locating points on the wheel cylinder a light coating of copper grease. This will ensure the brake shoes won't bind against the surface



**16** Re-fit the brake shoe assembly in the reverse order of how it came apart, making sure you have every component and spring in the same place as before. You may want to check the reference picture you took earlier…

**17** Before adjusting your brake shoes, make sure you back off the handbrake cables so that they are slack. If there is any resistance from the handbrake, you will not be able to adjust your brake shoes correctly



**18** With the brake drum back in place and the handbrake cables nice and slack, begin adjusting the brake shoes. Here's Keeno's top tip for adjusting brake shoes: depress the brake pedal every time you have made an adjustment. This will centralise the brake shoes and allows further adjustment of the star adjusters. You know you have your brakes correctly adjusted when you have depressed the brake pedal, adjusted brake adjusters a final time and have no discernable brake drag when you spin the drum by hand. Easy, huh? Now you can adjust your handbrake

**19** With the car back on the ground, torque the rear hub nut to at least 216ft.lbs, then tweak it further if necessary to line up one of the slots on the castle nut with the hole on the axle shaft. If nothing lines up, do not under any circumstances loosen the hub nut to achieve this. If you do, your brake drum will be loose and will oscillate on the splines, which will eventually cause drum failure. Not good. Job done

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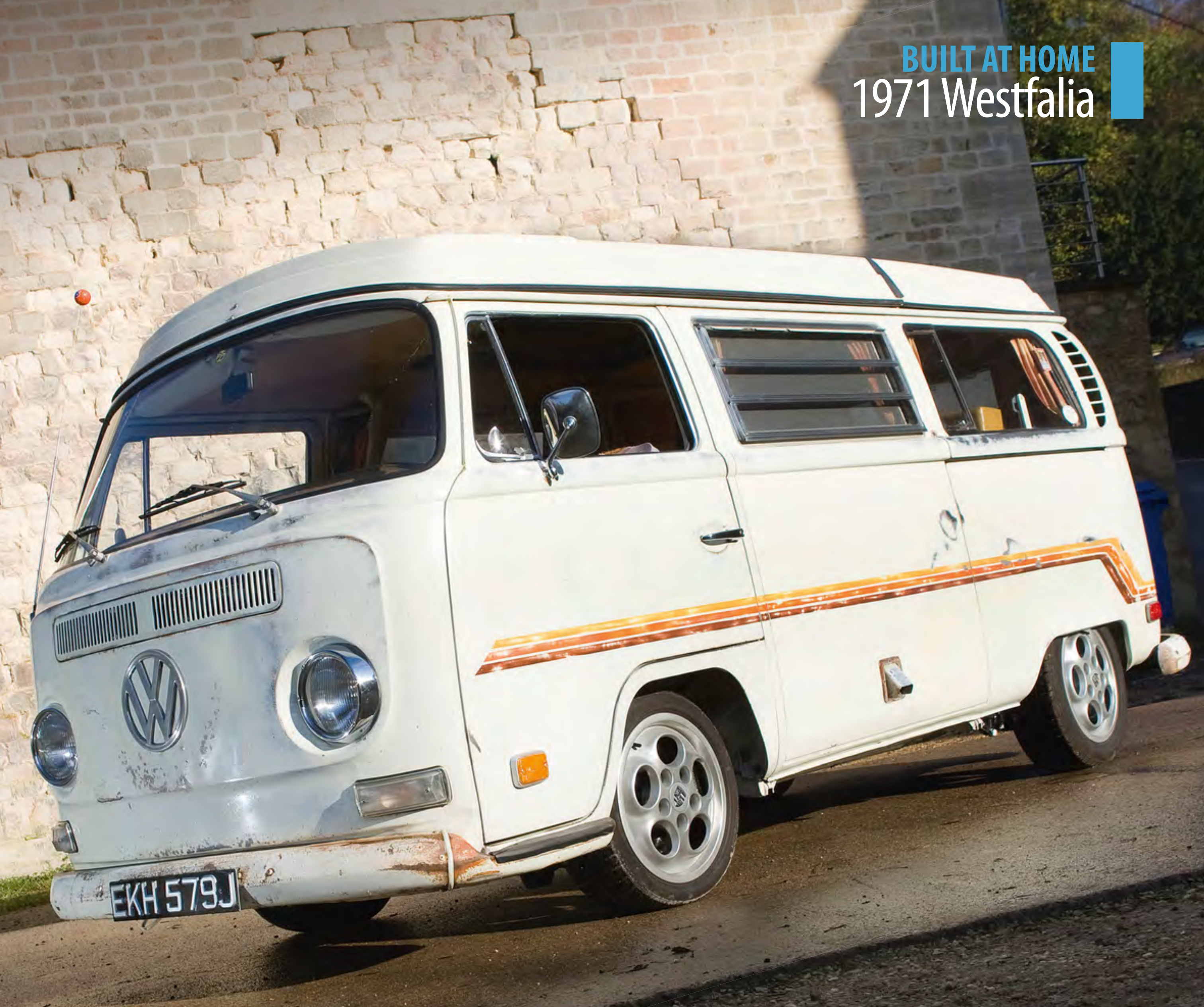


# Montana to climb

This Bus gives a whole new meaning to built at home. Read on to find out why…

**Words** Nick Wilkins **Photos** Mike Prior

My mum and dad got me my first air-cooled Volkswagen when I was 16. In the 25 years that have passed since then I have restored most years of Beetle from 1954 through to 1974, a few Karmann Ghias and a few Split and Bay Campers.

I now have a young family, so I thought it was time to do another Camper for cheap, fun family holidays. And ever since I saw Midlands Paint Werks' Bus at Vanfest in 2009, I knew what I wanted it to look like.

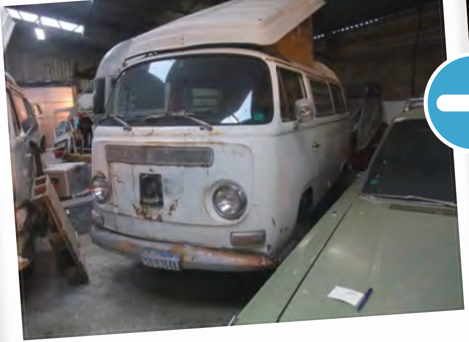
Bringing up a family on one income, as some of you will know, is hard going, so to get the Bus I wanted I had to sell my '84 German Look daily driver, my '54 Oval and travel the 30 miles to work and back every day on my bicycle!

After looking far and wide, I managed to buy the Bus I wanted right on my doorstep, from Jon Meder at Vintage Valley in Bristol. It was a nice, unmolested 1971 Westfalia that had been imported from Montana, USA. It was even delivered to my open-air workshop in Stroud. Thanks Jono.

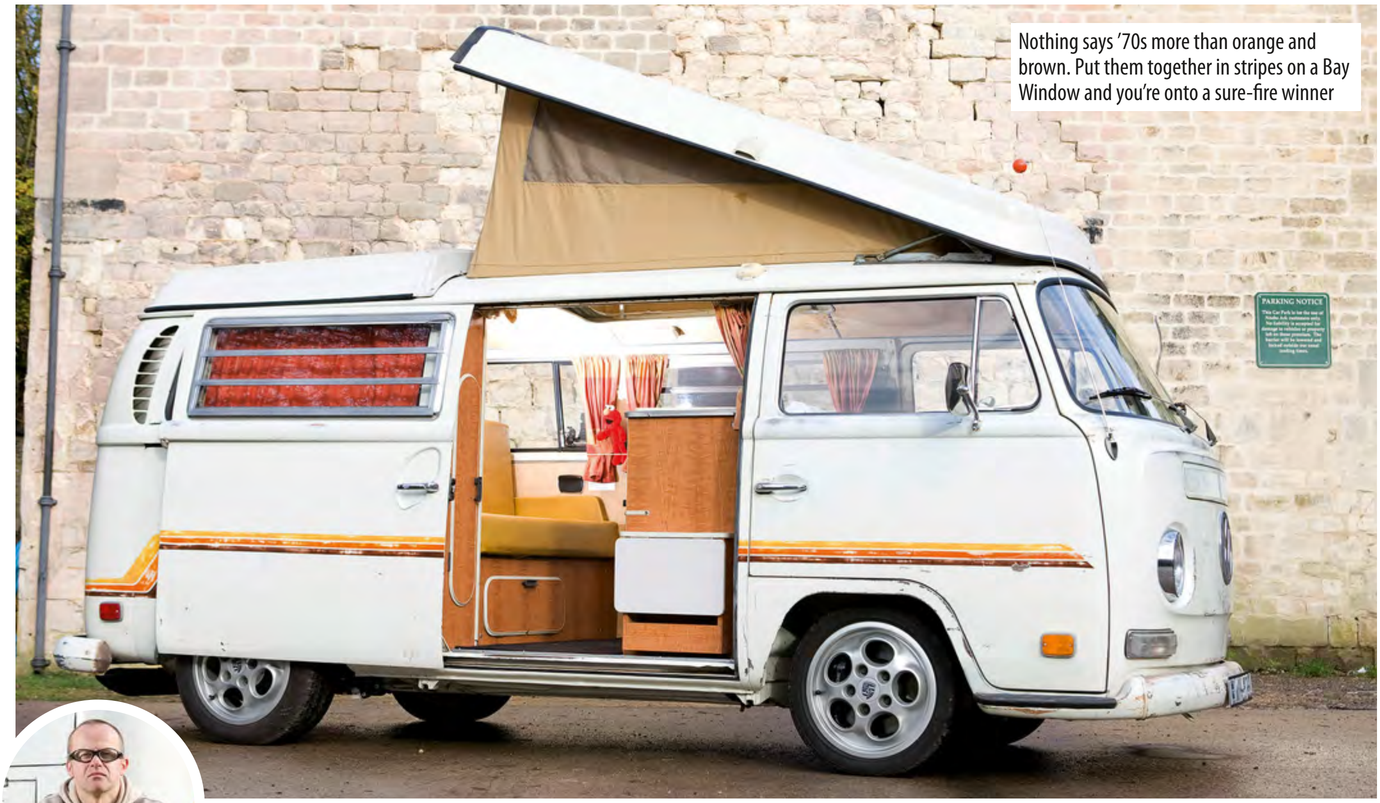
As winter temperatures in Montana can get down to -40degC, Campers tend only to get used in the summer, so it was pretty solid, though at some stage it must have seen some serious off-road action as I pulled out so much mud from underneath. I enjoyed growing the seeds I found in the mud though, which produced some wonderful flowers and grasses I've never seen in the UK before.

I love welding, so this is where I started. I had to replace both outer sills, both battery trays, the lower wheelarches, cab floor sections plus a

## RESTORATION TIMELINE



1. MAY 2012
Sold as seen. Sadly, the beauty was only skin deep



Nothing says '70s more than orange and brown. Put them together in stripes on a Bay Window and you're onto a sure-fire winner

## BUILDER INFO

**NAME** Nick Wilkins

**AGE** 42

**LOCATION** Stroud

**OCCUPATION** Mechanical engineer

**BIGGEST CHALLENGE** Keeping my hands warm and dry and still able to pick up small bolts

**FAVOURITE PART** The wheel and brake combo. The brakes are amazing!

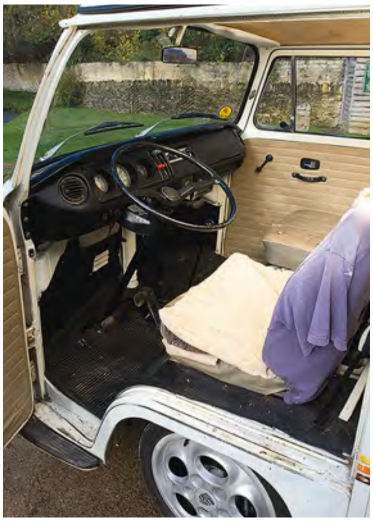
few other small patches. All the repair panels were made using panel forming tools made from wood and aluminium to get the pressed features into the panels. It cost me just £10 to make all the panels. I used the wife's car to drive over the forming tool, then a sledge hammer to finish off. The results look as good as factory pressings.

MIG welding outside in the wind and rain is hard work, so I had to pick my welding days. After the welding was done, I scraped off all the layers of paint back to the original, which unveiled some cool old stripes. Unfortunately, I could not save them, so I put copies back on again and aged them back, then blended the repairs into the original paint with rattle cans, picking my nights to paint (it's not too bad painting at night, as long as you have a head torch!)

Once solid, I started work on the interior. Luckily, all the lovely Westfalia furniture was in good shape, but I had to replace all the door cards and the headlining. After lots of cardboard templates, I cut the birch ply sheets to shape and popped them into place. I'm very pleased with the results, though it took a while to find ply with no knots in it at my local builders' merchants.

> "it's not too bad painting at night, as long as you have a head torch!"

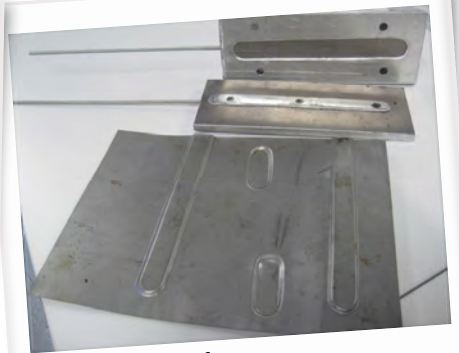
The Bus came with no keys and not much original wiring, most of which was burnt and fused together, so I ripped it all out and started again, using bits of old



^ Door cards are new, but the front seats are original. Looks like the driver's seat has taken a battering over the years

2 MAY 2012
The tear down (outside on the drive)

3 JUNE 2012
Cutting out the rot (outside on the drive)



4 JULY 2012
Making repair panels, using the wife's car!

## TECH INFO

**YEAR** 1971 Westy

**ENGINE** 1600cc twin port with twin 45 Dell'Orto carbs and re-worked 1300 heads

**SUSPENSION** Homemade 100mm narrowed beam with custom adjusters and flipped front spindles Homemade horseshoe plates and adjustable spring plates on rear

**BRAKES** Porsche 928 S4 brakes, Brembo calipers; stock rear drums

**WHEELS AND TYRES** Porsche 928 16-inch Teledials; 205/45-16 front, 205/55-16 rear

## OUR OPINION

It was all going so well Nick until the top tip! Seriously though, as someone who is just learning to weld, I'm in awe of what you have achieved outside on the drive. And, as anyone that knows me will tell you, if a Bus has got stripes on it, I'm on it. I love this Bus.
***James***

As Nick put it, "why use a drill when you can use a gun?!" This handy exit wound was where the aerial for the old CB radio left the building

Hands up anyone who doesn't love a bit of mustard on their Campervan?

Lovely Westy interior is all original, save for the birch ply headliner, which Nick made using cardboard templates to work out the necessary forms

Beetle looms to replace the wiring as the colours are the same. I then cut another key using the door lock barrel as a pattern. Oh yes, I also ripped out an old CB radio (the outside aerial wire exited the Bus through a bullet hold in the side!). I found an old period radio in my parts bin, and have hidden a Blaupunkt CD player under the dash and mounted some old school shelf speakers behind the front seats.

Next it was onto the running gear. I knew the stance I wanted, but I had to save costs where I could, so decided to make all the parts I needed to get it sitting right. I work at a local engineering company, so was able to stay after hours to use the machines to make a narrowed beam, custom slide-on beam adjusters, flipped spindles, rear horse shoe plates, adjustable spring plates… the list goes on. I even made my VW badge and number plates. This really kept the cost down, as did my brother, Andy, helping me out with materials.

Before bolting up the new suspension parts I got under the Bus and scraped off all the old underseal, which took me a few weeks, then painted the underneath white and lacquered it, so it now looks better than new under there.

What makes a Bus, I think, is the wheel choice and stance, and Porsche wheels and brakes were my only choice, mainly because I love Teledials on Bays, though it also helps that there is a Porsche 928 breakers within walking distance from my house. The guys there hooked me up with a set of 16-inch Teledials, some four-pot Brembo radial mount front calipers, plus hubs and discs to match, and a 16-inch Porsche spare wheel that fits over the big calipers. It was up to me to engineer the correct spacers and brackets to make them fit my spindles. The wheels were in a really poor shape

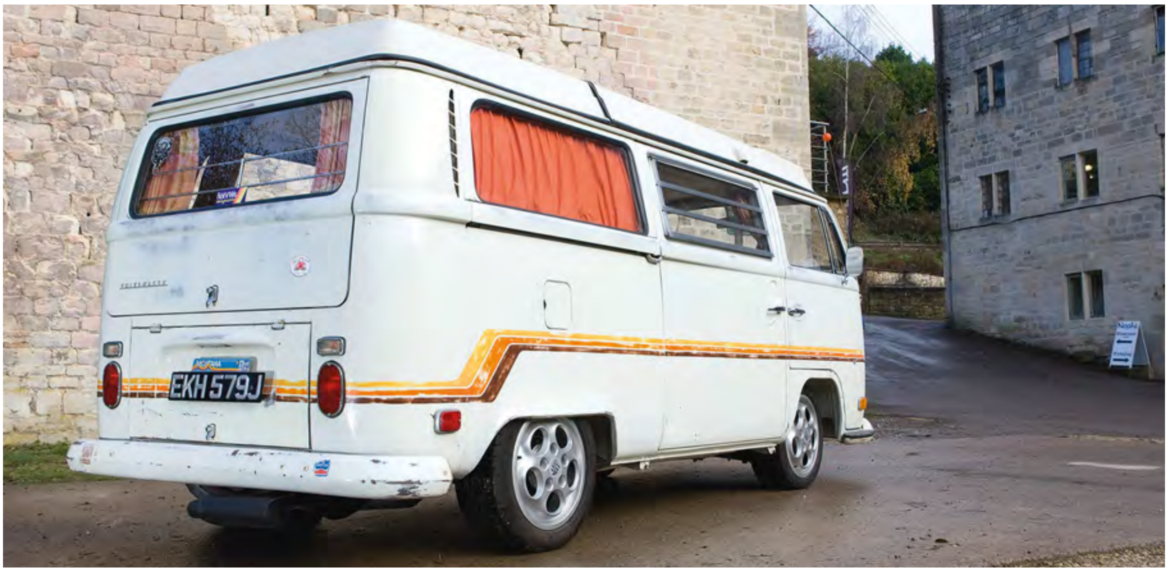
### TOP RESTO TIP

If you want that factory spot weld look, smear 1mm thick filler on the panel then, when dry, use a Dremel wire brush to make your 'spot welds' in the filler!

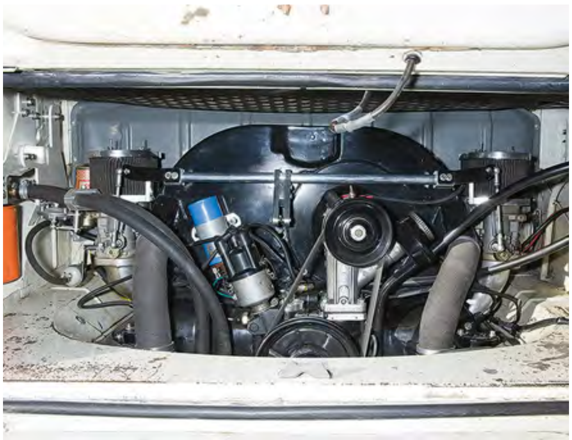
5 NOV 2012
In with the new metal, and some new paint, too

6 JAN 2013
Wiring was a mess. Rip it out and start again

7 JAN 2013
Suspension mock-up with homemade narrowed beam



The exterior paintwork belies the amount of clever fabrication work that has gone into this Bus. Even the exhaust is a Beetle unit that has been cut and re-welded to fit neatly



Engine is a 1600 twin port with hogged-out heads and choked down twin 45mm Dells

928 Teledials are fitted on Porsche hubs (and brakes) up front and on homemade adapters at the back

> “The motor pulls well up the hills and will easily do 28-30mpg on a run”

so, after shot blasting and pushing out any pothole damage, I base coated them in silver then 2K clear coated them. For the rears, I made some aluminium 112-to130 PCD adaptors.

Next on my list was to build an engine. After stripping the one that came with the Bus, it became clear it must have been running for a long time on three cylinders, which had destroyed number three journal. So, with the help of my good friend, Jeremy Roe, I managed to find enough within-tolerance parts in my parent’s garage to build a good 1600 bottom end. What with buying all the stuff I could not make, like CV joints, seals, balljoints etc. my Campervan kitty was now empty. The only good twin-port heads I could find were 1300cc heads so I got them up on the milling machine and bored them out to fit 1600 barrels. I also spent a long time with a die grinder opening out the inlet and exhaust ports as much as I dare.

Over the years of messing about with old Volkswagen I have collected a few nice old parts, so I had some 45 Dell’Orto carbs which are too big for a 1600 engine, so I machined up smaller chokes and jets to suit the engine size, then made my carb linkage, air cleaners and the brackets needed to mount the external fuel pump and oil filler. It took a week or two playing around with jet sizes and mixture screws to get it running sweet, but the motor pulls well up all the hills around Stroud and will easily do 28-30mpg on a run.

Finally, I have to thank my mum, Sandra, who is pretty handy with a sewing machine and ‘machined’ up some plaid curtains from old house curtains and reproduced my pop-top canvas in high quality tent material using the original as a pattern. I found over the winter my Bus was getting damp inside, so my mum made it attach with poppers. so I can take it out in 15 minutes for winter storage. Good job mum!

The time taken to restore the Bus was two years (it would have been quicker if I had a garage), and it went slightly over my £8,000 budget at £8,425 on the road, but I don’t think that’s too bad. ■

8 JUNE 2013
Build up (at least it was dry under here...)

9 JAN 2014
Engine building (outside in the rain)

10 APRIL 2014
Dialling in the stance (outside in the sun!)

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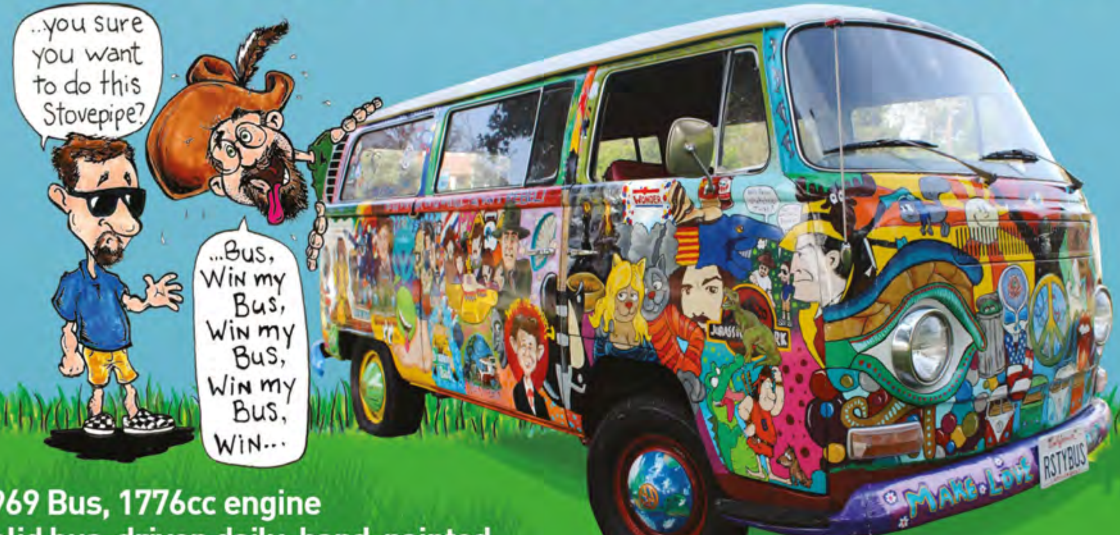
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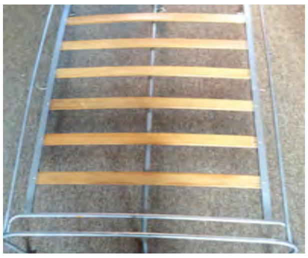

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# Thump! Thump!

## The company that, in just seven years, came up with some of the most extreme, eye-catching custom VWs to be seen anywhere

**Words**
Richard Gunn

Thump! Thump! came along in the second half of the 1980s, burned briefly but brightly, then disappeared the following decade. During this time, it made an impact on the VW scene unlike any other company, with some of the most radical custom VWs ever dreamt up, together with a range of imaginative parts so others could have a go themselves.

Thump! Thump! worked on a lot of VWs in a short space of time, but Billabug (above) was undoubtedly the boys' masterpiece

Thump! Thump! was set up by British enthusiasts Jay Townsend and Gary Constable in 1988. Jay's VW interest had begun in the first year of that decade when he bought a 1303S Campaign Beetle. Inspired by custom car magazines, he made a pilgrimage to the Mecca of the modifying car scene, California, in 1981 and there met some of the luminaries of the So Cal scene. He came back loaded with parts – many of which were unavailable in the UK in those pre-internet days – and completely re-worked his 1303S. His next project was a 1954 Oval, modified in his father's single garage. Gradually, his name and talent began to be recognised, to the point where even *VolksWorld* got involved, his 'The Duke' project being the subject of several How to: articles in the mag's early days.

> “Thump! Thump! creations set new trends”

As for Gary Constable, he came a little later to the VW scene. An airbrush artist extraordinaire, his first custom work was on his own moped, which got him noticed by a local bodyshop owner. That led to a job, which in turn led to a career doing bodywork and airbrushing on custom cars. He bought his first VW – a Type 3 Fastback – in the mid-'80s and modified it over the next three years. One of the specialists he used was Big Boys Toys (BBT) in Essex, where Jay was at the time working as the manager. The two became friends and, in 1988, decided to set up their own modifying firm, which they christened Thump! Thump! It was a brave step for Jay as he'd just bought a new flat with a hefty mortgage to pay. After paying the rent on a workshop in Hertfordshire, and the rent on the flat, he was left with just £10 for the rest of the month.

Nevertheless, Thump! Thump! flourished. An early lifeline was a Type 3 Notchback, which was de-trimmed, shaved and painted lilac, and which we ran an article on in 1988. Soon after that car broke cover, Thump! Thump! was booked up a year in advance with custom work.

Some of the cars that appeared from Thump! Thump! are now legend in British VW circles. There was the surf-inspired Billabug of 1989, with its b-pillars removed, concealed engine components and retina-searing Billabong material interior. Few custom VWs before or since have had the impact that car had at Bug Jam that year. Bug Jam 1990 saw a VW pilfer a Porsche idea with Europe's first Targa-topped Beetle, Targabug. The removable roof theme was continued on Lemon Bavoir, while other Thump! Thump! creations that set new trends were the paint-splattered Tempest of 1990, which proved a Beetle could look pretty slick on non-VW alloys (in this case, polished Peugeot 309 GTi rims), and 1992's Mirage, whose trick trademarks were its name cut into the plated vent panel under the rear window and a picture of itself and a beach reverse painted on the inside of the rear window.

For those who couldn't go the whole hog on a Thump! Thump! build, the company offered its 'Eqpd.' range of stainless steel steering wheels. They looked cool, but became unbearably hot on sunny days and your hands froze onto them in the winter.

Thump! Thump! came to an end in 1995 when the creative partnership of Jay and Gary disbanded. Gary took his creative skills to the USA, where he now works under the name Mutant Design, while Jay started Bakebean Design, specialising in domestic and commercial products. Both maintain an involvement in the VW scene and can be found on facebook. As Thump! Thump! however, they will always be remembered as the company that made jaws hit the floor, over and over again. ■

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